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WANDERINGS

IN THE INTERIOR OF

NEW GUINEA.

58595

BY

CAPTAIN J. A. LAWSON.

WITH FRONTISPIECE AND MAP.

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WANDERINGS IN THE INTERIOR OF NEW GUINEA.

CHAPTER I.

Difficulties in the way of my proposed expedition—Engage servants to accompany me—Take passages in the "Nautilus," and sail on 24th May—Reach coast of New Guinea 21st June—Papuans—Aboo and Danang—Land at Houtree—Description of Houtree—Bad conduct of Dobbs—Start for the interior July 10th.

It was in November, 1871, and while I was sojourning at Sydney, New South Wales, that I formed the resolution of exploring the interior of New Guinea, a country that had a great charm for me, as being but little known to Europeans, and therefore affording a new field for the naturalist and adventurer. But there were innumerable difficulties in my way. In the first place, there was not a single civilized station* in the island to serve as a basis for my operations. There was no place at

* There is one small Dutch fort and station, but they will not permit foreigners to wander beyond the precincts of the settlement.

which I might make the necessary preparations for my expedition, or upon which I could retreat in case I found it impossible to penetrate the dense jungle of the New Guinea forests. Transport was also out of the question; if I went, it was evident I must do so with a knapsack at my back and a rifle in my hand; for even if it had been possible to transport horses or draught oxen to the shores of this island, the nature of the country would have rendered them useless as beasts of burden. Again, the Papuans bore a very bad character at Sydney, and were described to me as a fierce, treacherous, and thievish race, but I paid little attention to these accounts, as I was fully prepared to run all risks. My greatest trouble was to fix upon a starting-point and obtain conveyance from Sydney to my destination. Here Fortune favoured me, and I accidentally met with a merchant captain who was in the habit of making trading voyages to New Guinea, and who undertook to land me at a village where he was known to the native Papuans.

This man gave a very different description of the natives of New Guinea from that I had heard from the colonists. He described them as of a gentle and inoffensive disposition in general, though ready to resent an injury and rather given to thieving. In trading transactions they would cheat if they could,

but he had never known them offer violence to merchants who had ventured amongst them. He had himself been engaged in a bartering trade with them for several years, and could speak their language fluently. He was entire owner of the vessel in which he made these voyages, and had prospered to such an extent that he contemplated retiring upon his gains at the conclusion of the cruise he was about to undertake.

My next care was to provide suitable servants to accompany me as bearers of baggage. I had with me a Lascar named Toolo, who had been in my service for the past two years. He was an intelligent and useful fellow, and much attached to me. I determined to take him with me as a personal servant, while three Australian aborigines were engaged as porters. These Australians had been brought up at Sydney, and had received a certain degree of education, two of them being able to read very tolerably. They were known as Tom, Joe, and Billy, and, according to their own confession, had lived a vagabondish kind of life, seldom having any regular employment. They expressed great willingness to enter my service, but when the time for sailing drew near, Tom repented of his bargain and made off "up country," as his comrades said, to be out of the way.

It was not until the latter part of May, 1872, that Captain Dobbs, with whom I had arranged for our passage to New Guinea, announced that his vessel was ready for sea. We went on board on the 24th, and about four o'clock the next morning slipped out of Port Jackson before a steady south-west breeze.

The vessel, called the "Nautilus," was a brig of two hundred and twenty tons burden, and so slow a sailer that we did not reach the coast of New Guinea till the morning of the 21st of June, although the winds were fair. Just after daybreak on that day we passed four miles to the southward of a small island, and about noon sighted the mainland. On the afternoon of the 22nd we anchored abreast of the village fixed upon as my starting-point, and almost immediately fifteen or sixteen native proas put off from the shore, bringing fresh provisions and other articles of merchandise. Each boat was manned by four or five Papuans, except one, which was the joint property of half-a-dozen Chinese adventurers, who had settled in the village. As the proas came up they were made fast to the side of our vessel, and many of their crews came on board, and greeted Dobbs as an old friend, and after a few civilities had been interchanged, traffic commenced, but, as I learnt afterwards, they had only brought

off such necessaries as they thought we might need for present use. These consisted of various kinds of fruits and nuts, some small figs and a large number of curious-looking fowls, with lean bodies and remarkably long legs; they were not bad eating though.

The Papuans were very repulsive-looking men, having coarse and ugly features, exceedingly short, squat bodies, black matted and dirty hair, and a lithe, monkeyish manner. When some of them were introduced to me and made to understand my business there, they looked surprised at first and then laughed heartily. However, on the whole, I was very well satisfied with them, and felt that I might trust myself amongst them without fear. Captain Dobbs was of opinion that I might easily persuade some of them to accompany me as guides, and he was right; for the offer of twelve dollars a month brought a score of anxious volunteers to enter my service. I selected two who had a knowledge of the English language, and who were further recommended to me as having spent the greatest part of their lives in the interior of the island. They were sailors, and had been in the habit of making voyages to the islands of the Indian archipelago, in the course of which they had picked up a great deal of information; and besides English, they spoke a

smattering of French, Dutch, and Portuguese, as well as several dialects of the Malayan. Aboo, the eldest of the two, was about fifty years of age, and at first sight he was a most repulsive-looking man, his natural ugliness being intensified by the cicatrice of a fearful cut he had received across the face while fighting with some Borneo pirates. He was but four feet three inches in height, though he had a tremendous chest, and I have seen him lift four or five hundredweight without appearing to exert himself in any extraordinary degree.

Danang, the other man, was scarce twenty years of age, but he was far more intelligent and lively than Aboo, and his features were almost passable; indeed, he was about the best-looking Papuan I have met with. He was, also, more than a foot taller than Aboo, and possessed of great muscular strength, though it was not often that he exerted it, for he was of rather a lazy disposition, and required looking after, which somewhat neutralized his good qualities.

Both Danang and Aboo agreed that many tribes of the Papuans, especially those inhabiting the north-east coast, were of a fierce and treacherous disposition. When questioned about the inhabitants of the interior, they said it was possible that a stranger going alone amongst them might be robbed, and

perhaps murdered; but if accompanied by natives, they had confidence that he would not be molested.

On the 24th of June I went on shore with my servants, and at the invitation of a chief took up my quarters in an empty hut erected within half a mile of the seashore. In return for this kindness I presented the chief with an old double-barrelled fowling piece and a few pounds of powder and shot, with which he was so highly delighted that he fairly danced upon receiving them. The only firearms he possessed before were an old flint-lock musket and a pistol, both of which were so worn that it was dangerous to fire them.

Having stowed away my goods and chattels in one corner of the hut, I left my Lascar servant Toolo and the two Australians to take care of them while I went with the chief to inspect the village. It contained about sixty huts and a large meeting-house, where I was told criminals were tried and public business transacted. I was curious to learn something about Papuan law, but I could not gain much information from my chief, except that capital punishment did not exist in that part of the island, or, indeed, in any part that he knew of. Small offences were punished by stripes or loss of goods, and grave crimes, such as murder, manslaughter, &c.,

by selling the offender and his family, if he had one, for the benefit of the injured party. Criminals, however, who had thus become slaves, were frequently able to purchase their freedom after a few years of bondage, and would then return to their native villages, where no reproach was cast upon them.

The number of inhabitants in this village—which was called by the natives Houtree—was two hundred and sixty-three, including the old chief and five or six subordinate orangs or magistrates. They were mostly engaged in fishing and trading with Dutch and Chinese merchants who frequented them; and they also, as I have mentioned before, made voyages to the neighbouring islands, which are colonized principally by the Dutch. The articles they have to dispose of are spices, drugs, gums, several valuable kinds of wood and bark, the well-known birds of paradise, some inferior pearls, cocoa-nuts, monkey-skins, and many other articles of the like nature. In exchange for these they receive European calicoes of brilliant colours and fantastic patterns, knives, guns, iron-work, powder, tools, and, I am exceedingly sorry to say, spirits, of which they are immoderately fond; and during the stay of the "Nautilus" I saw many of the villagers in a state of helpless intoxication, the result of rum-drinking on board the vessel.

The amount or value of the imports and exports I was unable to ascertain, but from what I saw and heard I should say they are very considerable, notwithstanding the smallness of the village.

The huts of Houtree were not arranged in symmetrical order, but were scattered about in twos or threes, and stretched east and west, some little distance inland, for nearly a mile. They were built under the shade of magnificent trees, and the chief's house was situated in the centre of a group of cocoa-nut trees. All the huts had large and well-cultivated gardens attached, in which were grown pumpkins, yams, bananas, cocoa-nuts, and many other fruits and vegetables, which were raised not only for their own consumption, but also for the supply of such proas, junks, and other craft as visited them. I ascertained that three or four small Dutch vessels generally called at Houtree in the course of the year, but that some hundreds of Malay and Chinese boats visited the place in the same period. This fact was a great relief to my mind, as it would furnish me with an easy means of leaving the island and reaching some civilized port when my exploration was over. I had no doubt of the truth of this statement of Kilee, the old chief; for during the fortnight that elapsed before the "Nautilus" left, over twenty

boats called at the harbour, making stays of from a day to a week's duration.

During the stay of the "Nautilus" I remained at Houtree, residing in the hut that had been allotted to me, and making short expeditions into the country around. A considerable quantity of land was under cultivation, and the fields were neatly enclosed with railings, and various means had been contrived to frighten the birds from the grain crops, the most ingenious of which was a kind of crank. This machine turned with the breeze, and made a tremendous noise, but it was useless in calm weather. The principal crops grown were the cereals common to the islands and southern countries of Asia, nutmegs, cocoa-nuts, and fruits. Nearly the whole of the plantations were the property of the chiefs and one or two native merchants; the remainder were occupied and cultivated by the Chinese I have mentioned as coming off to the "Nautilus" on our arrival.

I found the natives very friendly without exception, and I soon gained complete confidence in them. They were always ready to do me any little service I chanced to require, and I took care to further ensure their goodwill by making them presents of such things as I could spare. Some of my goods that it was impossible to take with me I committed to the care of Kilee, and he religiously kept his trust.

During the whole of my sojourn amongst these people, both at the commencement and conclusion of my journey, nothing occurred to shake my confidence in their honesty and truthfulness. No doubt they will not lose an opportunity of cheating in their trading transactions, but there is nothing strange about that, considering that they have to deal with rogues. I allude especially to the man Dobbs, who, having shipped the cargo that had been collected for him, slipped slyly out of the bay on the night of the 5th of July, and went off without paying for it, an action of the meanest class, which, besides doing the poor people a serious injury, might have led them to wreak their vengeance on me.

In person the natives were all of short stature, although of stout build and great muscular power. Their features, particularly those of the women and children, were not at all pleasing, being coarse and repulsive, and the skin of a tanned, yellowish hue. Their dispositions appeared to be kind and affectionate, the men showing great regard for their wives and children, and treating the aged with reverence and respect. They were industrious and clever, and adepts at inventing and contriving articles for domestic use; and their huts were kept extremely neat and clean, which circumstance alone is sufficient to place them far above the rank of barbarians.

They were well acquainted with the value of money, and Dutch coins were in circulation amongst them; but payment for labour in general was received in kind. The women and children, as well as the men, worked in the fields and plantations, but the most laborious work was performed by the men exclusively.

Having completed my arrangements, I started for the interior at four o'clock on the morning of the 10th of July, taking a north-west direction. The village of Houtree, my starting-point, is situated on Torres Strait, and my observations place it in longitude 143° 17′ 8″ E., and latitude 9° 8′ 18″ S.

CHAPTER II.

Provisions for the journey—Path through the forest—Pass an uncomfortable night—Salt marsh—Siskin parrots and fruit-bearing climber—Arrive at a village—Dinner in the chief's hut—Furnishing of a native hut—The Thadda plant—Toddy drinking—Mahalla—Monkey shooting—Billy and the brandy—Resume our journey—Birds of paradise and their nests—Teak trees—Enormous wallah trees—Fruit and flowers of the wallah—Quietude at mid-day—Pass near a village—Report of firearms—Ridge of hills and stream—Shoot a deer—Adventure with crocodiles—Discover a chain of mountains—Supper by firelight—Horrible noises in the forest—Filthy vulture—Moolah and das mellan—Green Parrakeet.

THE provisions and stores I took with me consisted of a small quantity of tea and coffee, some pickles and preserves, medicines, half-a-dozen bottles of brandy, a set of instruments for observations, twenty-four pounds of ship biscuit, a good supply of ammunition, and a few other articles. These were made into three packages, besides what each man carried in his haversack, and we took turns about in bearing them. My arms consisted of a double-barrelled rifle, a fowling piece, six-chambered pistol, and cutlass. My attendants had an old musket each and their knives. So provided we entered a

country that had never to my knowledge been scanned by the eyes of an European. Of course we had to trust to our firearms for the means of sustaining life; but Aboo and Danang declared the country abounded in game, and I soon had abundant proof of it.

Upon leaving the cultivated ground that surrounded the village we entered a dense forest, through which a narrow path or track had been cut; but so rapid is the growth of vegetation in this part of the world, that in many places the path was nearly choked up with creepers and plants, and my guides told me that the villagers were compelled to clear this road at least once a month in order to keep it open. The trees on either side were of enormous size and height, and their branches were so closely matted together with parasitical plants, that the sun's rays were excluded, and we appeared to be walking through a dimly-lighted tunnel. The festoons of creepers hung so low that we were frequently compelled to stoop in order to avoid them, which was rather tedious, burdened as we were. The air, also, was close and the heat excessive, so that about eight o'clock we were compelled to halt and rest, having advanced, I calculated, nine miles.

The spot selected for our bivouac was where a

large tree had fallen and cut out in its fall a convenient space amongst the jungle. Here, overcome with the heat and fatigue, I fell asleep and slept until after noon. In the evening we resumed our journey, and after walking about five miles, came to a salt marsh, where the pathway ended. At this place we prepared to pass the night. A fire was lighted and supper cooked, and we made a hearty meal of it; for we had eaten nothing but a small quantity of pumpkin since leaving Houtree, the heat being so great that all desire for food was banished till the cool evening breeze set in. We passed the night at the foot of a large tree. No watch was kept, as Danang declared it was unnecessary until we had penetrated farther into the country, but the fire was left burning, and during the night I replenished it from time to time, for I was very restless and could not sleep, notwithstanding that I felt very weary. In vain I turned from side to side, and placed my body in various strange attitudes to obtain rest and induce sleep. I could not follow the example of my companions, whose strong and steady breathing announced that they were enjoying sound slumber. It was midnight before I fell into a troubled doze, from which I was roused at three o'clock by Toolo, to continue the journey, early morning and evening being the only times when it is possible to travel in

tropical countries. After a breakfast of coffee and biscuit I felt considerably refreshed, and the morning being much cooler than on the previous day, we made good progress, shaping our course for a village of which the Papuans spoke, and which they thought we might reach before the sun began to exert its oppressive power.

On starting, we proceeded for some distance along the edge of the salt marsh. It was formed by the termination of a creek of the sea, and a considerable portion of its surface was covered with mangroves. During the prevalence of strong southerly winds the neighbouring lowlands were laid under water, which being evaporated by the heat of the sun, left the ground covered with a thick incrustation of salt. In one place the deposit was four inches in depth, and the salt was beautifully crystallized into various prismatical figures. I learnt from my guides that the natives from the villages for a great distance round frequented the marsh to procure salt.

Our way still lay through a dense unbroken forest, but we soon found a well-worn pathway. After an hour's march, I noticed a very gradual rise of the ground, and on questioning Aboo, he informed me that four or five days' journeying would bring us to a high mountain range, beyond which he had never penetrated, though he was well acquainted with the

country running along its southern slope. He said that I should find the country rise gradually until I came to the immediate neighbourhood of the mountains, where the ground was rocky and broken, with a rapid slope to the north-east.

I was greatly amused by some sprightly little parrots that were flying about amidst the tangled foliage over our heads, keeping, however, at such a height that it was impossible to distinguish the colour of their plumage in the dim light of the forest. So small were they and quick in their movements, that at first I thought they were humming-birds; but their shrill cry soon undeceived me, and upon shooting one I was convinced that they were of the parrot tribe. I then discovered that the plumage was brilliant green, each feather being delicately shaded with a golden gloss. The tail was black, edged with yellow, the middle feathers being dark blue. The size of the bird was not greater than that of one of the larger humming-birds. It appeared to be very sociable, living in large flocks near the tops of tall trees, and seldom or never descending to the ground. Each bird had its mate, to whom it showed the most intense affection, and I have seen dozens of pairs (for I often met with this bird afterwards) sitting on the same branch, caressing and feeding each other. When one of a flock is killed

the others fly round in a circle, uttering the most piercing cries; and as they then descend to within a few yards of the ground, any number might be killed with ease, especially as they lose all caution and seem entirely overcome with grief. The noise they make upon such occasions is astonishing; indeed, they are by far the most noisy birds I have ever met with. Their food is fruit, nuts, and berries; especially the berry of a peculiar climbing plant that ascends the trunks of trees to from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet. This plant shoots out a thin wiry stalk, at the end of which the bright red berries are held in a cluster. The little parrots cling to the slender stalks, and hang head downwards, while they eat the berries. I have myself tried these berries, and found them of pleasant taste and very cooling. The natives capture this little parrot and many other birds by climbing the trees at night and taking them from the branches where they are roosting. I have been told, since my return to Europe, that it is known to naturalists as the *Nasiterna pygmea*, or siskin parrot.

At seven o'clock we came to the skirt of the forest, and proceeded, due west, across a thickly-wooded plain. Half an hour later, having advanced, according to my calculation, twelve miles from the salt marsh, we came to a spot where timber had been felled,

from whence we could see the village spoken of by the Papuans. Immediately afterwards we met five of the villagers, who did not show much surprise at sight of us, and at my desire, intimated by Aboo, they accompanied us into the village. A few children were the only beings we saw near the huts, and they ran away screaming. In a few minutes, however, a small crowd of twenty or thirty persons had surrounded us, but they did not press upon us rudely, and one of the women offered me a bowl of milk. I asked Aboo what animal it was from: he said a goat. I did not know before that the goat was found upon the island; they had none at Houtree.

Both my Papuan guides were known in this village, and they pointed out the chief to me. I desired them to ask if we could be accommodated in the village, upon which the chief took us to his own house, and ordered several girls to bring water and wash our feet. When this had been done, mats were spread upon the floor for us to sit upon, and a mess of boiled rice was set before us, followed by a roast monkey and yams. The monkey was delicious, the flesh being white and tender and of excellent flavour, and the yams were a very good substitute for potatoes. The chief and his family, consisting of fifteen persons, and including his two wives, dined on the opposite side of the hut, and after the meal

each person prepared to take the usual mid-day sleep. The same mats that we had sat on at dinner were used for our couches, and the hut soon resounded to the sonorous gruntings of the drowsy natives. As to myself, I was too much excited with the novelty of the scenes and situation to sleep, and I amused myself by examining the hut and its contents. There was nothing in it that could be called furniture. No stool, chair, or table; but mats served the purpose of these useful articles, and were also largely used in the construction of the dwelling. The property of my host —that is, his household effects—consisted of a quantity of pots and kettles, most of them of European manufacture, an old musket of Dutch origin, and some tools and knives, evidently obtained from the traders who frequented the coast. The walls were covered with skins, principally those of the monkey, bird of paradise, and parrot, and I perceived, from the manner in which they were cured, that they were intended for trading purposes. Of fancy buttons, china ornaments, and other odds and ends, there were sufficient lying about to stock a small shop. Amongst other curiosities, I noticed some hundreds of boys' marbles and tops, thimbles, toys, and a small brass model of a cannon. Besides these there were many useful articles—such as scissors, tin drinking cups, two forks, an old teapot, a tiny looking-glass, about four

inches by six in size, a needle-case with needles, and a few glass bottles. All these things were neatly laid out upon rough wooden shelves, erected against the wall of the hut.

A slight partition divided the dwelling into two apartments, the inner one being devoted to the use of the ladies, who did not appear to indulge in forty winks; for I could hear them whispering together, and from sundry movements against the partition, I am inclined to think they were peeping through the chinks.

About three o'clock in the afternoon the chief awoke, and after muttering a few words to himself, got up and proceeded to arouse the others by means of hearty kicks. When all were thoroughly awake, the chief called to the women to bring toddy prepared from the sap of the cocoa-nut tree, and fermented by a process peculiar to the island, and which consists of putting the bruised leaves of a plant called thadda into the juice and beating it up with a stick until fermentation sets in, when it is allowed to work itself out, an operation which generally takes twelve hours to perform. The toddy thus prepared is highly intoxicating, and the Papuan often gets excessively drunk upon it. I have examined the thadda plant, but cannot tell to what species it belongs. It bears a small white flower of

very offensive odour. The berries are round, of a green colour, and full of a watery juice: they have not, I was told, the same effect upon the cocoa-nut sap that is produced by the leaves, which are large and spear-shaped. The height of the plant is seven or eight feet, and it is only found in the interior of the island. The dried leaves are as efficacious as the fresh, only a larger quantity are required, unless they are steeped in water before use. When the liquor has ceased to ferment, it is strained to clear it of the scum and sediment, and it is then ready for consumption.

When the toddy was brought, the chief presented the calabash to me first, and then to the others in rotation, beginning with the eldest man present, whom Aboo said was the chief's uncle. The calabash was thus passed round several times; and as fast as it was emptied the chief called one of the women to replenish it.

Finding the toddy a cool, pleasant drink, I imitated the example of the rest of the guests, and took large draughts, until it began to mount into my head, when I declined to drink more; but both my guides assured me that if I persisted in my refusal it would be considered an insult to our entertainer: so, that I might not give offence, I took a sip from the calabash in my turn. The others, not being so abstemious,

soon became very talkative; but, fortunately, the supply of liquor failed before they were actually intoxicated.

The chief seeming to be in a merry, communicative mood, I thought it a favourable opportunity to ask a few questions through Aboo, who acted the part of interpreter between us; but though he was a fine, intelligent-looking man, I could gain no information from him, and as he appeared to much dislike my inquisitiveness, I soon gave up the attempt to draw him out. I inquired the name of the village, and found it did not possess one of its own, but was called after the chief, Mahalla's village.

In the evening the chief proposed that we should go out to shoot monkeys, to which I readily consented; and taking with me Aboo, my Lascar servant Toolo and the Australian Joe, we went about two miles west of the village, to a part of the wood that swarmed with a species of large, long-tailed monkey. They were very wild, and as they kept at the top of the tallest trees we were obliged to fire at them with ball. It required a quick eye and aim to hit them; for they moved amongst the foliage with such extreme rapidity, that it was seldom possible to obtain more than a momentary glance at them. After a couple of hours' sharp practice, we had brought down about a score, besides several that

were wounded but succeeded in getting away, and one that was shot dead and remained clinging to the topmost bough after life was extinct.

Upon returning to the village, we found my servant Billy lying outside the chief's hut helplessly drunk. It was a long time before I could discover what he had been drinking, for all about the place denied having supplied him with toddy. At length it struck me that he had been at my brandy, which I was carefully preserving in case of sickness. I made an examination, and found one bottle drained of the last drop, at which I was so exasperated that I gave Master Billy a sound thrashing, which, however, failed to sober him in any perceptible degree.

After a supper of roast monkey, we prepared to retire for the night. As the air was very close and hot, I preferred sleeping outside the hut. I had a good night's rest, and rose before daybreak next morning to resume my journey. The hospitable chief endeavoured to prevail upon me to remain with him for a longer period, but I declined his kind offer to provide for me and my servants, and wished to make him some recompense for the kindness we had already received at his hands; but he would take nothing save a little powder, with which he was greatly pleased. We parted in the most friendly manner, and I promised if possible to pay him a

second visit when I returned. It will be seen in the last chapter that I kept this promise.

Upon leaving the village we marched due north, taking a native path till it trended too much to the east, when we left it and plunged into the jungle. The grass was here very tall, towering five or six feet above our heads, and quite shutting out our view of the surrounding country; but as it bent easily to the weight of our bodies, we had little difficulty in getting through it. We had not worked our way far through this grass before we came to a brook of very clear water, through which we were compelled to wade. It was more than four feet deep in the middle, but the bottom was hard and gravelly. On the other side we struck into a deer track, which appeared to be much used; for it was well worn and enabled us to get along with renewed speed. As there were no trees on this plain, with the exception of an old clump here and there, we suffered considerably from the sun; and after a couple of hours' march I thought it advisable to halt and rest. We did not resume our journey until half-past six in the evening; but as it was a fine moonlight night, we continued to advance till midnight, when we reached the skirt of a forest, and lay down for the night, having previously lit a fire to keep off beasts of prey, for my guides spoke of an animal of the tiger

kind as infesting the woods of that part of the island. From their description of it, however, I concluded it was much too small for a tiger. The native name they gave it was "moolah."

July 13.

I was awoke early in the morning by the screaming of parrots in the trees overhead, where thousands of them were fluttering about and feeding. They were of five or six species, one being jet black in colour and another scarlet. There were also immense numbers of the little siskin parrot, that I have already described; and now, for the first time since my arrival in the island, I saw the magnificent bird of paradise alive and in a wild state. A flock of about twenty birds was flying round a tall tree, and catching the insects that swarmed amidst the foliage. Presently one bird pinned a large butterfly and flew with it to a branch of the tree, where it stripped off the insect's legs and wings, and then devoured the body. While breakfast was preparing I saw them perform this feat repeatedly. Sometimes, if the fly was small, it was swallowed instantly; but when the bird captured the larger flies and beetles it invariably perched upon a branch while it consumed them. When on the wing it frequently

uttered a soft note, something like the twittering of a swallow, and no louder than the cry of that bird. Wandering a short distance from our camping-place, I met with several other flocks; and in a large tree I discovered several nests, from one of which a bird of paradise flew. I immediately fetched Danang, who professed to be a clever climber, and ordered him to endeavour to procure one of these nests. He had much difficulty in ascending the trunk of the tree, which was large and smooth; but when he was once amongst the branches, he soon brought down a couple of the nests. They were roughly constructed of fine grass, and lined with some kind of vegetable down. Each nest contained five eggs, about the size of those of the sparrow, and of a delicate pink colour, spotted, particularly at the largest end, with red. According to Danang, the eggs of some birds of paradise are pure white with red spots, and they also vary in size. During the period of incubation the male feeds the female, who does not leave her nest until the young are hatched. Should the male be killed, the female will continue to sit upon her eggs until she is starved to death. As the natives kill and capture these birds at all seasons of the year, this catastrophe often takes place, and many birds are thus wantonly destroyed, which, in my opinion, is rapidly decreasing their numbers; for they are not

by any means so numerous as one would be led to expect, judging from the quantity of skins which are exported. Their food consists exclusively of insects, and they are very ravenous. In the crop of one that I shot, there were upwards of forty large beetles, not yet digested, besides the remains of many other insects. They are exceedingly fond of a large, handsome beetle, whose wings are a brilliant green colour, with a golden shade; and in pursuit of it they sometimes fly very low; but they never alight on the ground.

Between the hours of half-past five and eight this morning, we passed five large watercourses, all of them, however, easily fordable. The country through which they ran was densely wooded, and the soil was evidently exceedingly rich. Unfortunately I am not a botanist, and therefore I cannot record the various species of trees and plants I met with in this part of the island; but amongst them was a tree identical with the Indian teak, though it was not very plentiful. I afterwards discovered that this tree is more abundant near the centre of the island, where I have seen forests composed almost entirely of it. It is used by the natives in the construction of their houses, and for many other purposes.

Another tree that attracted my attention was one that had very much the appearance of the European

elm, only that it was considerably larger; and I should say it is the tallest tree in the world. One specimen that I measured was three hundred and thirty-seven feet in height; another three hundred and twelve, a third two hundred and ninety-eight. The diameters of these three trees were, twenty-two feet, twenty-five feet nine inches, and nineteen feet eleven inches respectively. To describe the impression produced upon me by these enormous trees is impossible. I was astounded at the sight of their magnitude, made still more impressive by their graceful elm-like growth. Even the lower limbs were much larger than the main stump of any tree that I had ever seen before, although I have travelled over a great part of Hindostan and Southern Asia. As the leaves on this tree were no larger than those of an apple tree, each individual must have borne millions on millions of them; they were also much the shape of an apple leaf. The foliage gave shelter to thousands of parrots and other birds; indeed, there were such innumerable hosts of them, that the tree was literally alive with feathered tenants, which was the more singular that the surrounding trees were almost deserted except by monkeys. I suppose safety was their object in harbouring in these trees, for the great height was sufficient to protect them from any missile weapon. The circumference of the

largest of the trees whose dimensions are given above was eighty-four feet seven inches, including some inequalities and projections of the trunk. The seed is a kind of nut, about the size of a small lemon, and the same shape. They are eaten by the natives, who call them wallah-nuts; but to my taste they are insipid, though I could eat them when roasted, after the manner of chestnuts. The outer shell of the nut is black, and very hard. Inside there is a second covering resembling leather, which encloses the kernel. The kernel itself is hard and white, and less than half the size of the entire nut. As it is impossible to climb the wallah tree, the Papuans are compelled to wait for the nuts until they drop from over-ripeness or are nipped off by the parrots out of pure mischief; but sometimes the birds destroy them before they have arrived at maturity.

The flowers of the wallah are star-shaped, of a brilliant scarlet, with yellow petals, and grow in clusters. They have a faint perfume, which is not unpleasant; after rain it is very perceptible, although the trees may be a considerable distance off. The parrots bite off the blossom in the same manner they do the nuts; and the ground under some of the trees may often be seen covered with the beautiful scarlet clusters. Fruit and flowers are seen on one tree at

the same time, but the nuts are only ripe between the months of September and January.

Besides the teak and wallah trees, there were camphor laurels, cocoa-nut palms, and many different species of bamboos; and I believe I recognized the sandal-wood tree, but I cannot be sure of this. Hundreds of other trees I had never seen before; but a few were known to Toolo, who declared he had met with similar species in his native land. Unfortunately he either did not know, or could not recollect their names.

Our halting-place for the mid-day rest was on the left bank of the last stream we crossed, and at a most delightful spot, under the shade of a mass of tangled creepers and parasitical plants. Indeed, the surpassing beauty of the country at this point (although our view of it was very circumscribed, owing to the wooded nature of the ground) was such, that I felt inclined to prolong our halt and remain there until the next morning; but my anxiety to push forward towards the centre of the island was too great to admit of the delay; and as soon as the sun began to decline, we resumed our tramp.

I would here remark upon the extraordinary quietude that pervades the forest between the hours of ten in the morning and four in the afternoon. At daybreak, the humming of insects, screaming of

parrots and chattering of monkeys, together with a thousand other sounds from birds and beasts, created such a hubbub, that we had to shout when talking in order to hear each other. Gradually, however, as the heat of the sun became more and more intense, the noise would die away, until at mid-day the stillness of death reigned on all sides; and scarcely a living creature could be seen, for all were hid in the thick and impenetrable foliage. But as soon as the sun began to lose his power, the noise would recommence with as much clamour as ever, and continue till dark, and even throughout the night many strange noises disturbed the calmness of the air. The noonday rest is common in all tropical countries; but I have never observed in the course of my rambles such an entire stagnation of animal life as that I have witnessed in New Guinea.

After marching four or five miles we came near some cultivated ground, in which several men and women were at work, or engaged in frightening the birds; but we did not approach them, and they suffered us to pass by about a quarter of a mile from them without appearing to discover that we were strangers. Farther off we saw the roofs of a couple of huts showing above the bushes, so that we concluded we were on the outskirts of a village; and while we were in its neighbourhood, we heard the

report of fire-arms several times at no great distance. Without doubt these sounds proceeded from natives who had procured muskets by trading on the sea-coast.

A little before dusk we came in sight of a ridge of hills, running, apparently, due east and west; and the slope of the country began to rise rapidly to the north. Half an hour later we reached the bank of the largest stream we had yet met with. While we were searching for a convenient place to ford over, a herd of between fifty and sixty deer trotted down to the water to drink. I instantly seized my rifle and began to creep along the edge of the stream, keeping my body well under cover of the bushes and trees. Notwithstanding my caution I made a slight noise, which caused the old buck who led the herd to prick up his ears; and fearful that my game would take alarm and be off if I attempted to get any nearer, I raised my rifle and covered the buck's shoulder. It was a long shot, but it went home; and after running a few yards, the animal I had selected fell, and was unable to rise. Danang cut its throat, and, before the life was well out of it, proceeded to skin and dress it. It was a splendid animal, and in good condition, weighing, according to my estimation, a hundred and forty or fifty pounds. We were thus enabled to make a most seasonable

addition to our stock of provisions; though, of course, we could only carry away the best joints, and were obliged to leave the bulk of the carcase to beasts of prey.

We were delayed at this stream for an hour and a half: for, besides the time lost in dressing the deer, we had great trouble to find a place where the water was fordable, and at length we all stripped and made our clothes into bundles, with the intention of swimming over; but just at that moment Billy called out that he had found a ford, which proved to be correct, though the water came up to our chins. The distance across this river (for I think I may dignify it with that title) was about sixty yards, and we had barely set foot upon the opposite bank when three large crocodiles or alligators came paddling down with the current, attracted, no doubt, by the smell of the blood of the deer that had been killed a short time previously. When they came abreast of the spot where we were dressing, one of them swam in to the shore, and made as though it intended to land near us, upon which my attendants caught up some of their arms, and portions of our baggage, and ran off as fast as their legs would move; and their fright was so contagious that I fairly lost heart, and followed them, with nothing on but my shirt and socks. In two minutes, however, I had recovered

myself, and taking Toolo's rifle, I went back to protect our property. The others followed close behind me, and we found that our fright had been needless: for the three reptiles had landed on the other bank, and were busy at work on the abandoned portions of the deer's carcase. We lost no time in collecting our traps and marching off; which was, perhaps, our wisest plan.

We came to two small brooks at short intervals from each other; both with rapid shallow streams. In crossing the last, the Australian, Billy, let his bundle fall from his head, and broke two bottles of brandy; an accident which caused me great annoyance; for brandy is an article of inestimable value to the explorer. Thus half my stock of this invaluable medicine had been wasted by this careless rascal, now and on a former occasion. Indeed, I think he was not thoroughly recovered from his drunken bout.

Shortly after eleven o'clock we gained the summit of the ridge of hills, very tired and footsore, and ravenously hungry; but these drawbacks did not prevent me from admiring the enchanting beauty of the view from our elevated position. The moon was at the full, and its light so extremely brilliant that the scenery was lit up as if by an artificial illumination. I could even see some night-hawks in the

valley we had left behind us, flopping about in their peculiar flight, and every now and then dropping like a stone upon their prey.

But of course my eyes first wandered to our front, and a sight met them there that I little expected. Far away across a wide stretch of country rose an imposingly grand chain of mountains. Their outline was distinctly marked against the dark blue sky, and was very irregular and broken. Looking in a north-west direction, they appeared to rise to an immense height; but eastward they ran in a rugged line of less noticeable elevation. Aboo declared that these were the mountains of which he had spoken, and beyond which he had never penetrated. In reply to my questions, he said he had heard natives from the interior speak of volcanoes, or "thunder mountains," as he termed them; but he was not aware that they had ever caused any destruction in the island, neither had he ever seen them himself. To all appearance the country lying between this chain and the ridge of hills where we were halted was a series of valleys, thickly wooded as far as I could see.

While I was examining the mountains, Danang and the Australian had made a fire and put down the hind quarters of the deer to roast, and the air was soon filled with a most savoury odour. When cooked,

it was consumed with a ration of biscuit per man; and, perhaps because I was excessively hungry, I thought it the most delicious meat I had ever eaten. While we were at supper, our ears were greeted by a prolonged and horrible howl, proceeding, Aboo said, from the moolah, or New Guinea tiger. From the uneasiness the two Papuans evinced and expressed, I began to think that the animal was really dangerous; and therefore, as an additional guard against any attack the beast might have courage to make, two more fires were lighted, and all the rifles and muskets loaded; and I determined from thenceforth to have a watch kept through the night.

Toolo was the first to mount guard, and I relieved him in two hours' time. The moolahs were still howling dreadfully, and a more horrifying outcry I have never heard. It is ten times worse than the screech of the hyena. Nor was it the only frightful noise that resounded through the forest that night: for five minutes after I had relieved Toolo, a large bird alighted on a tree directly overhead and suddenly uttered such a shrill scream that all my party were awakened, and started to their feet in alarm. At intervals of a few seconds it repeated the cry until I shot it down. It was of the vulture tribe, and its body emitted such an intolerable stench that we

were compelled to drag it away from our sleeping place. There were many others of the same species in the neighbourhood, and from time to time they repeated their horrible scream, sometimes close at hand, and then again at a considerable distance off.

I could almost have imagined that this place was haunted by demons, so many and disagreeable were the sounds I heard here. Besides those already mentioned, some animal continually uttered a dismal moan, like a man in extreme anguish; and towards morning a beast of prey, probably a moolah, seized its victim in our immediate vicinity; and the poor creature, whatever it was, seemed to make a desperate defence, crying piteously the while. It was soon overcome, and for a full hour afterwards I could hear the crunching of its bones. I made several unsuccessful efforts to frighten the moolah, as I judged it to be, by throwing firebrands towards the spot where it was; but it did not retreat until the day began to break, when these dismal sounds gave place to the noisy, but cheerful, screaming of the parrots and cockatoos.

July 14.

Sun-rise was very grand, and revealed the full beauties of the scene around us. The foliage of the trees beneath us was of a thousand different hues and shades; and birds of the most gaudy plumage

literally swarmed on all sides. The distant mountains appeared of greater magnitude than on the previous night, and I could trace them for many miles in a north-west direction. One mountain, distant about thirty miles, was at the least ten thousand feet in height.

As we were all very tired through yesterday's exertions, I determined not to resume our march till evening, in order to give our wearied frames a thorough rest. While breakfast was preparing, I visited the place where the moolah had feasted, and found a pool of blood partly dried up, and the remains of a large deer, of a species different from any I had ever seen before. Aboo recognised it by the native name of das mellan.* Its horns were of very singular shape, branched like a two-pronged pitch-fork, and rather small, considering the size of the animal. The colour of its hair was a rich dark brown, with a black stripe running down the neck, between the shoulders and apparently the whole length of the back, but the hind quarters and loins being eaten away, I could not be certain of this. Its hoofs were exceedingly hard and sharp; and Aboo said that when the moolah ventures to attack a herd of das

* I would here remark, that all native names found in this work are spelled exactly as they are pronounced by the Papuans themselves.

mellans, they will resist him courageously, and often come off the conquerors.

I also went to look at the vulture that had so startlingly disturbed us last night. Myriads of tiny black ants were already at work upon it, and had eaten into the body in every direction; while the ground for many yards around was completely covered with them, coming and going in the most bustling manner. The bird was very large, but so disgustingly offensive that I could not take its measurement. The feathers of the wings and back part were black; and the breast light grey. In a couple of hours nothing was left of it but the skeleton, so rapidly and industriously had the little ants worked. From Aboo I learned that these birds are never seen to eat anything but the vilest filth, which accounts for the impure odour their bodies emit.

In the evening we pushed forward about eight miles, over an undulating tract of country, not so thickly wooded as it had appeared from the hills; and the further we advanced the less dense became the woods. Next morning we commenced our day's work at daybreak, and as the air was cool and fresh, we managed to cover about twelve miles of ground. The first four miles was through a park-like country, the trees growing in clusters and groves with scarcely any brushwood; the last eight was across an open

plain covered with a growth of grass and herbage to the height of three or four feet, which made walking a tedious operation. This herbage harboured a great number of quails and small green parrakeets. Of the former I shot about a score as we walked along; of the parrakeets I only procured one specimen, as they were very wild. It was the size of a skylark, and entirely of a light green colour, though, as it moved about in the sun, its plumage reflected all the colours of the rainbow.

CHAPTER III.

Ascent of the Papuan Ghauts—Beautiful flowers—Remarkable lily-like flower—Troublesome fissures in the earth—Extraordinary mist—Wild goat—Deep precipice—Suffer from cold and thirst—Distressing position of my party—All more or less knocked up—Lay by for a rest—Elevation of the principal mountains—Gigantic scorpion—Several new birds shot—More scorpions—Magnificent beetles and butterflies—We attempt to move forward, but are delayed by the weakness of Danang—Discover and enter another village—Received and lodged by one of the villagers—Sassofrang and his son Taa—Description of the Village of Fig Trees—Children and vultures—Anecdote of a Papuan gamester—Account of a Papuan farm—Rudeness of the chief—Taa's wives and children—Polygamy and the punishment of crime—Night in Taa's hut—Breakfast under novel circumstances.

On the 16th of July, at six o'clock in the evening, we commenced the ascent of the range of mountains, which, using the privilege of explorers, I named the Papuan Ghauts, because of their resemblance to a part of the Western Ghauts I once passed in the East Indies. The sides of these mountains were almost destitute of trees, but amongst the few that were sparsely scattered here and there were some enormous wallah trees. The ground was much broken, and huge masses of rock lay thickly on the

surface, some of them occupying two or three acres of land, and being fifty or sixty feet in height. That these rocks had been detached from the mountains above by some fearful convulsions of nature was abundantly testified by the wild disorder in which they were cast about; and the strata of which they were composed was arranged in all manner of directions, from horizontal to perpendicular. The ascent was steep from the first, and it soon became exceedingly difficult; especially as we had heavy burdens to carry with us.

Although trees were scarce here, herbage and plants were plentiful, even to luxuriance; bushes and shrubs also formed, in many places, thick and impenetrable brakes; and the multitude and beauty of the flowers I cannot describe. At every step we crushed them down, so close together were they; and this continued until we had reached an elevation of four thousand feet; and even at the extreme summit of the mountain, several species were represented by an odd member or two, although it was nearly eleven thousand feet above the level of the sea. Lilies of three different kinds, red, white, and yellow, were very abundant; but I did not notice them at a greater height than fifteen hundred or two thousand feet. Daisies, similar to those which grow in our English meadows, but as large as sun-

flowers, were very common. They were crimson-tipped, but not very modest, seeing they lifted their heads to a height of eighteen inches.

But by far the most beautiful flower I saw here was one borne by a bulbous plant. It was the shape of a narcissus, nine inches in diameter, and of a lily-white colour, spotted with deep crimson. It gave forth a delightful odour, which was so powerful that one's hands would retain the perfume of it for hours after the plant had been handled. The leaves were six or seven feet in length and one in breadth, and so tough that I found it impossible to break one of them in two: there were from thirty to fifty on each plant, but seldom more than one flower at a time, though there might be several buds in various stages of growth. The bulb was as large as a man's head, the height of the plant nine or ten feet, the flower standing several feet above the leaves. Clustering round the foot of the flower-stalk, amongst the leaves, was a large quantity of soft white down, which I have proved by actual comparison to be of the same kind as that used by the bird of paradise to line its nest: so that if this bird does not actually alight on the ground, it comes to within a few inches of it. But I should mention that it is only in certain districts that the birds of paradise use this down, and then not invariably.

Our progress soon became not only difficult but dangerous also, owing to the numerous rents and chasms in the ground, many of which were of unfathomable depth. Some of the smaller cracks were hid by the long grass, and in consequence several of us trod into them and fell, with no worse result, however, than a few bruises; though it was necessary to exercise extreme caution, as from the narrow awkward form of the fissures our legs were placed in considerable danger of being broken. These obstacles, and the great slope of the ascent, compelled us to take a wandering, roundabout course, so that we ascended very slowly; and about nine o'clock I thought it advisable to halt for the night, and not attempt to proceed further until we had daylight to assist us in avoiding any unexpected danger.

July 17.

As the first rays of the rising sun cast their crimson light above the horizon, we commenced to move upward, but our progress was speedily stopped. When we started, the valley below was hid from view by a dense white mist; and, strange to say, a similar mist hung about the summit of the mountain we were ascending, while a broad zone, extending several thousand feet above and below us, was left perfectly clear. A few minutes after

we had started from our sleeping-place, the mist began to rise rapidly from the valley, rolling up the mountain side like volumes of smoke, and we became enveloped in a fog so thick that we could not see a greater distance than ten or twelve yards before us. To advance under these circumstances was impossible, and if we had attempted it, we should have assuredly walked over some precipice; all we could do, therefore, was to quietly sit down and wait patiently until the atmosphere was clear.

Our lungs were so much affected by this mist that it was positively painful to breathe; and we were all afflicted with a violent fit of coughing and sneezing. It was so cold, too, that I shivered as if ice had been suddenly applied to me, and my companions appeared to suffer even more than I did; and Billy complained bitterly, and accused me of bringing him there to die. A little brandy, served out to each man, caused a slight improvement in our condition; but it soon wore off, and we felt worse than ever. A sense of oppression of mind and low-spiritedness took possession of us, accompanied by a restless feeling and desire to be on the move, insomuch that I had great difficulty to keep my followers together. Between six and seven the mist cleared away, with the same remarkable suddenness with which it had come on, and revealed a magnificent stretch of

country to our eyes. But we did not stop long to admire it, for I was anxious to gain the top of our mountain; but before we recommenced the ascent, we found it necessary to change our clothing, which had become saturated with the mist. Two hours elapsed before we thoroughly regained our usual strength and spirits: the first half-hour we were that weak as scarcely to be able to bear our baggage with us, but as the exercise increased the warmth of our bodies, the burden became less fatiguing.

As we ascended higher, we found the ground become more and more rocky and broken, and covered with a little blue flower like a forget-me-not, which clung to the hard rocks with such tenacity that it required a strong pull to disengage it. In several places it served to help us up the almost perpendicular face of the cliffs.

Amongst these rocks we came across a flock of wild goats, and after a great deal of trouble and loss of time, I succeeded in obtaining a shot at them, though from at least six hundred yards' distance. The animal I hit fell into a ravine, from which it took us an hour to recover it; but it was worth the delay, for it was in admirable condition and excessively fat. Its hair was from six to nine inches in length, but very coarse and matted together. Taking with us as much of the meat as we could

carry, we wended our way along the brink of a precipice over which several large black eagles were soaring, and every now and then alighting on a rugged rock, where I supposed their nests were built. I took it into my head to look over this precipice, and lying down upon my chest, I crept to the brink and peeped over, but immediately closed my eyes and started back in horror: for though I could see rocks many hundred feet below me, the bottom of the gulf was lost in darkness. Taking up a heavy mass of rock, as much as two of us could lift, we threw it into the abyss. It rushed down with a dull, hollow, crashing sound, that ended with a noise like that of an exploding cannon. The echo lasted for nearly five minutes, and the eagles flew away uttering a terrified cry of alarm. I repeated the experiment several times with stones of various sizes, and it was astonishing what a noise even the smallest pebble would create. The distance across this gulf, from the place where we were standing to the opposite rocks, was about one hundred and fifty yards. In other places it was rather wider, but there was not much variation in the width.

Precisely at half past twelve o'clock we reached the highest point of Misty Mount, as I named it, from the incident that had occurred in the morning. It was a barren spot, where the herbage grew in

stunted, withered tufts; but the little blue flowers were plentiful, as were also some small white ones, resembling geraniums in shape. These plants, and the scanty grass, derived their nourishment entirely from the rock: for I could not discover the least sign of vegetable mould. Upon examining the grass closely, I found that its roots spread over the surface of the rock like a network, and ran into every little fissure and crevice they could find, where they maintained a firm hold.

It was bitterly cold here, and we were glad to wrap our sleeping blankets around us in addition to extra coats. We also suffered severely for want of drink; all our water flasks having been exhausted at the morning meal: therefore I only halted long enough to make a few observations, and then we commenced the descent on the north-west side of the mountain. From our elevated position I could count fourteen other peaks to the east and north-east, three of which were evidently of superior height to Mount Misty, and five to the west. The tops of all of them were cloud-capped, and indeed we could see nothing but clouds and mountains.

By four o'clock we had arrived near the foot of Mount Misty, but we were hemmed in by mountains on every side, and were compelled to take a westerly direction for five or six miles, by which time our

thirst had become tormenting, and there was no prospect of our being able to alleviate it that night. The ground, though rocky and irregular at this part, was pretty thickly wooded, and we marched on as fast as possible, in hopes of meeting with a pool or mountain rivulet. About ten that night, Danang dropped in a fainting state, and we were obliged to halt for three hours before he could continue the journey; meanwhile we made vain endeavours to assuage our sufferings by chewing leaves. At length I tried the effect of a little brandy, and it certainly gave us relief for a short time. As soon as Danang was sufficiently recovered, we turned to the north and crossed a low ridge of hills. We had now become so exhausted that we staggered like drunken men, and Billy sat down and declared he would go no farther. Upon my threatening to march on without him, however, he altered his mind, and shuffled along some distance behind, but it was certain that none of us could hold out much longer, and I felt that I was fast giving way. Every five minutes one or other of the party had to sit down and rest, and as much valuable time was ost in waiting for them, I gave orders that they should follow as soon as they were able. In a very short time I had only Aboo and Toolo left with me, the two Australians and Danang remaining behind

with all my baggage. Aboo seemed to suffer less than any of us; but poor Toolo was in a most distressing state, his eyes swollen and bloodshot, and glaring like those of a frenzied madman; yet he bravely held out as long as he could, and did not give way till about four in the morning. Making him as comfortable as we could under such distressing circumstances, Aboo and I pushed on at our utmost speed, for it was evident that a very short period would settle our fate if we did not find water.

Fortunately another mile brought us to a brook of bright clear water, to which we rushed with frantic haste, and as soon as we had satisfied our parched throats with hearty draughts, we filled all the empty flasks we had with us, and went back in search of our companions. The first man we met was the Australian Joe, who was crawling along with the aid of a stick he had picked up. A little water revived him wonderfully, and leaving him to find his way to the stream, we went to the help of Toolo, whom Joe had passed on the road, and declared to be insensible or dead; but when we came to him, we found him endeavouring to make his way after us. I returned to the brook with him, sending Aboo to the help of the other two, whom he brought up in about an hour and a half's time in a terribly worn-out con-

dition. The quantity of water drunk by Billy was enormous, and more than I thought it possible for the most capacious human stomach to contain. I myself found great benefit and ease from bathing; but after resting a short time, I became so stiff and sore that I could hardly move. All of us had walked the skin off our feet, but Aboo had not suffered so severely as the rest of us; and in fact he seemed to be as hard as iron, for after a good sleep he appeared none the worse for the trying adventures he had been through. Myself and Danang were not so fortunate, for during the 19th, 20th, and 21st, we were too ill to stand, and had to be waited upon by our companions. During this period of helplessness we were dreadfully tormented by insects, who attacked every exposed part of our bodies, and got into our wounded feet, so that we were obliged to have them washed and cleansed every hour.

In looking back to this time of suffering, I always remember with gratitude the kindness of the poor fellows in my service, who, though they had only been acquainted with me a few weeks, paid me the utmost attention, and nursed me with a care that could not have been exceeded by my best friend. Every little thing that could add to my comfort or peace of mind was done. All my baggage had been abandoned during our late march, and Aboo knew

that this caused me much anxiety for fear it should be lost, and single-handed he recovered and brought it all up to our camping place. He also prepared an ointment of herbage that had great healing powers, and was of immense benefit to our feet.

On the 22nd, I was sufficiently recovered to walk about in the neighbourhood of our camping place, and take a few angles for the elevations of the mountains around us. Mount Misty rises to a height of 10,672 feet, a peak seven miles to the north-west of it to 12,580, and another three miles west of the latter to 12,945. All three of these mountains are remarkably bold and prominent, and very similar in outline. The average height of the range in this part was from 2000 to 3500 feet; and the number and closeness of the peaks, together with the great variation in their elevation, are in the highest degree extraordinary, and entitle the range to be considered one of the most remarkable in the world. The north side is much more thickly wooded than the south, but nowhere is the forest so dense as to be difficult to penetrate; and at a greater height than 2000 feet, trees were only seen by us singly or in small clumps.

In the afternoon I had a narrow escape of being stung by a scorpion. I was turning over the contents of my haversack when the reptile shuffled out of a

roll of linen, and, elevating its tail, ran towards me so swiftly that I had barely time to scramble out of the way. It was the most horrid-looking creature conceivable, and the largest I had ever seen or heard speak of, being of the enormous length of ten inches. Its colour was a dull green, shaded into grey and black on parts of the body and nippers. A very slight blow from a stick was sufficient to kill it. How long it had been in my knapsack, it is impossible to say, as I had not turned it out for some days; and during the time I had been ill, it had been hanging on a tree, in such a position that it would appear impossible for the reptile to crawl into it.

July 23.

Danang still very ill. Shortly after breakfast his nose bled to an alarming extent, and we were compelled to plug up his nostrils. The rest of the party recovered, except that their feet were still very sore. I myself was still weak, but progressing favourably. I spent the day in shooting, and made the following bag,—eight doves, twelve quails, three pheasants, and six birds of species unknown to me. The doves were light grey, with green crests and a scarlet ring round the neck. They frequented tall trees, and were difficult to get at. The pheasants also frequented trees of considerable height, but

they were tame, and not much frightened at the report of a gun. Their plumage was splendid as well as extraordinary. The body was chocolate colour, spotted in regular round spots with yellow. The wings were dark brown, with a white band across them; and the tail was also dark brown, with a white band. The breast was rose colour, gradually becoming lighter until it verged into white on the belly. The crest on the head and the two middle tail feathers were black, and the naked skin round the eye red. Its feet and legs were pale pink. It was only half the size of an English pheasant.

The unknown birds were three with bills like that of the snipe, and a reddish plumage; two small finches, rather less than a sparrow, and of a sooty black on the back, and light grey underneath; and lastly a bird of the size and shape of a thrush. Its colour was pure white, and when shot it was sitting on the topmost twig of a bush, about twelve feet from the ground, uttering a series of strange cries and noises, at first like the smacking of a carter's whip, then resembling the rapid clatter of a shuttle, and finally dying away in a prolonged melancholy whistle. In the course of our stay about this place, I frequently heard the noise of birds of this species, especially about the dawn of day, and afterwards in the interior, hardly a day passed without our seeing

and hearing it. It eats both insects and fruit, and lives principally on the ground and in bushes, seldom flying into the trees. Its nest is a rough affair constructed of grass in a bush. It lays five eggs of a light green colour, spotted and blotched in irregular patches with grey, brown, and black.

When I returned to camp I found Aboo fishing in the brook for eels. He had already caught a great many, and was pulling them out at a great rate, with a hook and line. They were small; few being more than twelve inches in length, but their flavour was delicious; and what with fish and fowl we made a sumptuous supper.

July 24.

Aboo went out in search of game this morning, as we were getting short of provisions, and returned about eight o'clock with a fine deer weighing a hundred or a hundred and twenty pounds. My feet being too tender to permit of my taking much pedestrian exercise, I occupied the day in making some researches into the natural history of the jungle about our camping place. One of the first objects I came across was a scorpion of the same kind as that which had found a billet in my haversack, but this specimen was a little smaller, being only eight inches

and a quarter in length. It was concealed beneath a stone which I lifted in search of beetles, and, when brought to light, showed fight with many expressions of anger, thrusting up its tail, in which, is the sting, and running round in circles in a manner that would have been very laughable had not the creature been so horribly hideous to the sight. In the course of a short search I found eleven others, the smallest of which was seven and the largest nine inches and a half in length. Having heard how desperately these reptiles will fight with each other, I tried the experiment of placing two together. They went at it at once with the most malicious rage, trying their utmost to tear one another to pieces. One of them soon lost a leg, but though they repeatedly stung each other, it was some time before either succumbed to its injuries, and at length they both died within a minute. My two Papuan guides evinced a great fear of these scorpions, declaring that all who were bit by them inevitably died; and after the haversack adventure, we all used extreme caution.

I succeeded in making a magnificent collection of beetles and butterflies in this part of New Guinea, comprising over a hundred different kinds. Amongst the beetles the most remarkable was a large black one, five inches and a half long by three

broad. It was covered with white triangular marks, and its head was furnished with horns two inches in length. The female had horns, but only a quarter of an inch in length; being in fact mere projections on the fore part of the head. This, I believe, is the largest beetle in the world. Its habitation is in hollow trees and in the crevices of decayed wood; where I also found a very handsome, though much smaller, beetle. It was bright yellow, with very elegant and delicately formed horns. A third species of horned beetle was red in colour, and several were blue and green with a metallic lustre.

To describe the butterflies I met with here and on subsequent occasions, would require a volume to itself. In size they ranged from the tiniest of moths up to gigantic butterflies, whose wings were a foot across when expanded; and in colour they were of every known hue and shade. The largest specimen I obtained, and whose wings measured exactly twelve inches across when stretched out, was black, with a red border to the wings, and red bands round the body. In the centre of each wing were three light blue spots arranged in a triangle. The body of this fly was as thick as my thumb, and six inches in length. The feelers were seven inches in length, and curled into three coils.

I have no wish to weary the peruser of this little

book with monotonous descriptions, but I trust to be excused for mentioning three more species of butterflies, on the ground of their superb beauty. The first is met with in open plains only, where it feeds on the grass, and it is scarce. Its wings are deep crimson without any marking, but its body has the appearance of black velvet. It is extremely lively and difficult to catch, and the greatest care is requisite to avoid removing the colouring matter from the wings. In size it is five inches across. The second insect is a moth, and is found on the trunks of trees, sitting very close to the bark. Its size is only two inches across, and it looks exactly like a leaf; its colours adding to the resemblance. It is light green veined with black, and there is a row of small black spots near the edge of each wing. The third fly is also an inhabitant of trees, and is about four inches across the wings. Its colour is a deep puce or purple, with five crimson stripes on each wing. The body is red, with a line of white spots down the back. It has a most singular appearance when fluttering about amongst the branches of the trees.

The greatest part of the 25th, 26th, and 27th, I spent in surveying the mountains. The principal results of my observations have already been given. On the 28th, Danang was so far recovered that in the cool of the evening we were enabled to march

about five miles, but he was too weak to permit of our going farther. Next day we covered another eight miles, but the exertion was too much for our patient, and the two following days we were compelled to halt and give him rest. On the 1st of August we again attempted to advance, making a wide detour to avoid a mountainous ridge in our front. Two hours after starting we came in sight of a large village, and I determined to run all risks and enter it.

As soon as we appeared in the street, a crowd of men, women, and children, began to collect around us; and I commanded Aboo to inform them that I desired permission to remain in this village for the night, for which accommodation I would pay them, if money was of value to them. Upon this one of the men offered to lodge us in his hut, and we followed him, the crowd readily falling back to allow us plenty of room to pass. He conducted us to one of the huts about the middle of the village, the children shouting and screaming, and the people coming out to look at us as we passed along, but they did not press after us, or come to make any inquiry about us.

When we entered our host's hut, our ears were greeted by the loud and frightened cries of children, but there being but one small door and no window

in the building, it was so dark that it was some time before my eyes became sufficiently accustomed to the gloom to permit of my seeing anything save a number of dark-looking heads and faces. There was a great deal of jabbering, occasioned, apparently, by the head of the family explaining who and what we were, and by the endeavours of the woman to quiet the youngsters, which was a work of time and patience. At length, however, some degree of tranquillity was restored; and my eyes having become familiar with the semi-darkness of the hut, I was enabled to make out the forms of eighteen or twenty persons, excluding ourselves. In one corner a woman sat on the ground, pounding something in a mortar, and near her another suckling a queer little baby; while behind them, half a dozen perfectly naked children were huddled together, staring in awe and fear at the intruders. On one side of the hut, sitting cross-legged, with his back against the wall, was an old man with white hair and beard, smoking a long Dutch pipe and filling the already close atmosphere of the place with a choking cloud of strange-smelling smoke. He was the first Papuan I had seen with a pipe; and in answer to my inquiries he informed me that he had learned the habit from Dutch traders. He smoked tobacco when he could get it (which was seldom), and at other times any

weeds or herbs that would burn well. He said that the inhabitants of this village, which was known by the name of Burtemmy tara, or the Village of Fig Trees, frequented the coast to trade; and a party was then preparing to leave in a few days to barter with the crew of a large vessel that they had received information was lying off the south coast. On their last trading expedition, the old man said, they had quarrelled with the captain of the ship, owing to his refusing to give them the price for their goods that had at first been agreed upon. A fight ensued, in which two European seamen on the one side, and nine Papuans on the other, were killed outright, besides many wounded, four of whom afterwards died of their injuries. They had often been robbed by foreign merchants, and on more than one occasion natives had been carried off by force to serve as slaves. Fights and murders were frequent; and sometimes, when the traders were strong enough, they landed and burnt the Papuan villages near the coast, which of course led to treachery and revenge on the part of the injured natives. Such was the old man's tale, and I see no reason to doubt the truthfulness of it. I know that the traders, as a rule, are a demoralised set of rascals, often no better than pirates, and always ready to take advantage of the natives, whom they think it no crime to rob and shoot on the slightest provocation.

I asked the old man his name. He said he was called Sassofrang, and volunteered the information that my host was his son, and bore the name of Taa. Sassofrang's wife was dead, and he lived with his son and looked after his farm when he was absent upon trading excursions: for Taa raised considerable quantities of maize and rice, and also possessed a hundred head of cattle; from which circumstances I concluded he was a man of some importance in the village, though I found he was not a chief.

As I expressed a desire to look over the farm, the old man offered to conduct me, but his son Taa would not allow it, and insisted upon guiding me himself. He spoke very ill-naturedly and authoritatively to his poor old father, and ordered him to remain in the hut, but at my request he suffered him to go with us. As we walked through the village, I observed the women and children peeping through the doors and round the corners of their huts; and several of the men came and spoke to Taa, making inquiries I supposed about myself and my business amongst them. Taa appeared to give them short answers, and they soon withdrew, and did not attempt to crowd around me as they had done on my first entrance into the village.

The huts in this village were built close together, only sufficient space being left between them to permit the inhabitants to pass from front to rear.

They were arranged in two irregular rows, with a good broad road passing in front of them, and a few odd hovels were scattered about within two or three hundred yards of the main street. The drainage of the place was very defective, and the stench in some places insupportable; and this was the result of mere laziness: for instead of carrying the offal to a distance, the inhabitants threw it just outside the doors of their huts, where it lay festering until some filthy vulture fetched it away. There were a great many vultures about the ground; some of them so gorged that they could scarcely hobble out of our road, yet they did not keep the street clear of carrion. A favourite amusement of the native children was to chase these vultures when they had so stuffed themselves as to be unable to fly, and it was laughable to see the ungainly attempt of the bird to escape by running. They frequently fell over, and then the children were almost sure to effect their capture before they could rise again. After playing with and tormenting them for a time, the youngsters would let them go, and recommence the chase with loud shouts and much merriment. Sometimes one of the birds would turn upon its tormentors; and then they would speedily get out of the way, and select a more docile victim.

The natives protect these vultures, no doubt for

the service they render to them as scavengers, and the birds are quite tame and will often venture into the huts in search of rats, which they capture with remarkable dexterity, and devour greedily. I saw one young urchin ring the head off a vulture with which he was playing, and then slyly hide the body in a cesspool. Some of his companions, however, betrayed the young culprit, and his father gave him such a thrashing as I should imagine he would not be likely to forget in his day and generation. This was the only occasion upon which I saw a Papuan chastise his child.

The fig trees from which the village takes its name, grow along the north side at the back of the huts. They are very large and wide-spread, and I was told bore excellent fruit. They were in flower when I saw them, and a party of boys were employed frightening away the parrots, who do great mischief by nipping off the blossom.

The domestic animals running at large about the streets of the village were goats, pigs, and dogs of a very fierce breed. One of them made an attack upon me, and before he could be beat off he had torn the legs of my trousers to pieces. I was very thankful that my legs did not share in the ruin. There were, also, immense numbers of fowls running about the street, in the huts, on the huts, and in

every place that was accessible to them; which I thought an intolerable nuisance, but the inhabitants not being over scrupulous as to the amount of dirt in their huts, took no notice of them, and rarely put themselves to the trouble of driving them away.

All Papuans are inveterate cock-fighters, and what the brutal little bull-dog is to the Brummagem rough, the long-legged game cock is to the Papuan sportsman. And they bet with the blindest infatuation, often reducing themselves to abject poverty, and even staking the clothes from off their backs. Occasionally, driven to despair by their losses, they will destroy themselves, and I heard of one man who having sat down to play dice with a Dutch captain lost all he had, and then staked the liberty of his wife and five children. He lost; but rather than suffer them to go into slavery, he murdered the whole family and then cut his own throat.

Taa first conducted me to see his cattle which were penned in several large sheds at the top end of the village. They were short-legged, hump-backed oxen and cows, and had a great resemblance to the yak. During the day they were allowed to roam about the neighbouring plains, but at night were enclosed in these sheds to protect them from the moolah. Their hair was long, shaggy and black, except on the chest, where it was white. Their horns were short and very

slightly curved, which gave them a sharp look about the head, and on the whole they were very handsome animals.

The land Taa had under cultivation did not exceed thirty acres. It consisted of a large plot of rice, a maize field, and a cocoa-nut plantation. He said it employed twenty or thirty men besides women and children to keep this ground in order. He paid all his labourers with grain and vegetables in harvest time; at other seasons with such produce as he had in store, generally dried provisions. Money was never given in payment for labour, nor was it in circulation amongst themselves, though they well knew the value of it, and desired to possess it to be used when trading on the coast. Those natives who possess fire-arms would take powder in exchange for their labour: three charges being reckoned good pay for a day's work.

Many of the inhabitants of Burtemmy tara, could speak the Dutch language. Sassofrang spoke it fluently; and Taa so well, that I could generally understand his meaning. Their own native tongue has a pleasant and somewhat pompous sound, not at all guttural or harsh; but it appears to be a difficult language to learn. During my stay in the island I tried diligently to acquire a knowledge of it, but it was a long time before I had sufficiently

mastered it to maintain a conversation with a native.

When we returned to the hut, supper was ready, and while we were eating it, a smart, fine looking man came in, and was introduced to me as the chief of the village. He had heard, he said, of the arrival of strangers, and he wished to know if we had come with the intention of trading. I explained my object. He listened attentively until I had finished and then laughed aloud, and as I thought rudely. I told Aboo to ask him why he laughed, (for I was obliged to converse with him through an interpreter) and he replied because he thought a man must be a fool to waste his strength in walking through the country without he expected to gain some advantage thereby. I tried to make him understand the advantages that might accrue to him in common with all Papuans, if the interior of the island was opened up to Europeans, but without success; the more pains I took to explain, the louder he laughed. Before he left he asked for powder and bullets, and seemed much offended when I told him we had none to spare. As it was of importance that I should avoid giving him offence, I made him a present of some trifling articles, which did not however restore his good humour, and suddenly he got up and marched off without saying a word to anyone. He

was a very finely made man and tall for a Papuan being about five feet eight inches in height. From so promising an exterior I hoped at first that this chief would prove an intelligent and open minded young man, but I soon found that he was proud and overbearing, and had an immense idea of his own importance, so that I was very glad when he took his departure.

Taa had two wives and eight children of various ages from twelve years to an infant of a few months. He took but little notice of them while I was there, and from the appearance of one of the poor women I should think she had recently been most brutally ill used, a suspicion that was confirmed by the servility with which she attended to her lord's commands. At supper he now and then threw a half picked bone to one of his wives, or amongst the children, as though they had been so many dogs; and these stray morsels was all that the poor creatures obtained in the way of food that night.

Polygamy is not common in New Guinea. It is seldom that a man has more than one wife, and never, so far as my observation goes, more than two; though a few men keep concubines who are invariably their slaves. In cases of adultery both the man and the woman are put to death. The method of execution is to bind the criminals together and

drown them in the sea if accessible, if not in the nearest river, where the bodies are generally eaten by alligators; but if by chance they are washed ashore they are burnt and the ashes thrown into the water. If a man kills his wife he has to pay a heavy fine to her relatives if she has any, otherwise the fine goes to the chief of his village or tribe, but he cannot be put to death for the murder; and over the lives of his female slaves he has unlimited control. There are no male slaves in New Guinea, though occasionally natives are sold into slavery for their crimes, but always to foreigners, and chiefly to the Dutch who transport them to their settlement in the Indian Archipelago where they work in the spice plantations or become servants in private families. In the course of a few years they generally obtain their freedom and return to their native land. But murders and other serious crimes are rare, and the people are not so immoral and barbarous as is usually reported, indeed they are entitled to be considered quite as civilized as the class of traders who frequent their coasts. The worst that can be said of them is that they are quick of temper and resentful, hence the many broils and fights that have taken place between them and the Dutch, who have made many unsuccessful attempts to settle on the island and keep up a regular trade with the natives.

As Taa's hut contained only one apartment, and that not very commodious, we had to lie pretty close together in order to make room for the whole of the occupants. This was far from comfortable, especially as I had been in the habit of sleeping in the open air for the last few weeks, and I would have slept there now had not my host made objections to it. Moreover the floor swarmed with vermin, who worked away tooth and nail all night long, and in the morning my face was so swollen that I could scarcely see. Those plagues of all tropical countries the musquitos were also very active, and several times during the night, small lizards dropped upon me from the roof or ran across my face, a liberty that was far from pleasant notwithstanding their harmlessness. I felt thankful when the first rays of morning light shone through the open door and the chinks in the walls and roof, and first one and then another of the family roused up and began to make preparations for the refreshment of the inner man.

Breakfast was soon ready, and consisted of a kind of bread made from pounded maize, goat's flesh, thickened milk and eggs. The bread, though very coarse and almost as hard as biscuit, was palatable; but the milk which was sour and mixed with corn flour, I could not touch. I caused much astonishment and amusement to my host and his family by

boiling the eggs, a method of cooking them that they had never witnessed before; for all the Papuans either roast them in the ashes of the fire or eat them raw.

We partook of breakfast in the manner universally prevalent in New Guinea; viz. sitting in a circle on the floor with the viands in the middle. All the party eat from one dish indiscriminately, and when they drink, the bowl is passed from one to another until it has been round to all. The women and children take their meals after the men have finished, and clear up the fragments.

If my entertainers were astonished to see me boil eggs, they were much more so when I proceeded to make tea. They stared at me as at one who was brewing some magical concoction, but nevertheless evinced a strong curiosity to taste the strange liquid, which I gratified by passing a cup round amongst them. They all without exception spat it out in disgust, although sweetened with sugar. One of the children, a lad of about ten years of age, got hold of the tea-pot when my back was turned and placed the spout into his mouth. Of course he dropped it with a yell, being badly scalded, and I have no doubt ever afterwards considered my tea-pot a veritable "witch thing."

CHAPTER IV.

Leave Burtemmy tara—Pass several hamlets—Rugged range of hills—Curious cliff—Invigorating effects of tea—Oppressive state of the atmosphere—Fearful death of a native—Destruction of human life by reptiles—Tremendous storm—Its ruinous effects—Pouched squirrel—Two deer shot—Sandy plain—New Guinea hares—Horned snake—Fine grassy savanna—Grasshoppers—Deep stream and fish—Discovery of Lake Alexandrina—Excessive heat and strange variation of the thermometer—Ducks—Enormous frogs—Beautiful little kingfisher—Fish found in Lake Alexandrina—Papuan words for sea and lake.

August 2nd.

We did not leave Burtemmy tara till six o'clock in the evening. Before leaving I gave Taa four dollars in payment for the lodging and accommodation he had afforded us; and I also gave poor old Sassofrang a couple of dollars, which he received with great thankfulness and appeared to consider a small fortune.

It was a lovely evening, cool and clear, with a gentle breeze blowing from the south-west; and as the ground was easy to get over, we were enabled to march at a good round pace. Danang seemed to have recovered his usual health and strength; but

as it was necessary to take care of him, I exempted him from carrying any part of our burden, lest too great an exertion should bring on a relapse.

For the first five miles our road lay across a well wooded plain, where we met with several people in charge of herds of cattle and goats; and we passed a couple of small villages or hamlets, but gave them both a wide berth, as I did not wish to delay. After this we ascended a range of hills, very steep and rugged, although their height nowhere exceeded three or four hundred feet. Here there was a great number of fig trees, but none so large as those at Burtemmy tara, owing, no doubt, to the want of care and cultivation. In a small valley on the south side of the range I found some very fine peach trees, but the peaches were only just formed, and some of the trees were still in flower. These hills also abounded in wallah trees, mangos, a species of large black plumb, limes, and a few tamarind trees, the latter remarkably stunted in growth.

From the summit of the ridge I obtained a good view of the country ahead. It was in its general features the same as the tract we had just passed through. The horizon was bounded by a line of hills similar to those we were now on, and with the aid of my glass I made out that they were densely clothed with vegetation.

The shades of night were beginning to draw on rapidly; we therefore tramped on at a good round pace, and succeeded in marching another six or seven miles, which brought us to the foot of the second range, where we prepared to pass the night having advanced about twelve miles in all from Burtemmy tara, which I considered a very fair evening's work. The spot selected for our sleeping place was under a perpendicular cliff, that rose to the height of about five and twenty feet, and projecting out on one side formed an excellent natural arbour, protected over head by a mass of tangled vegetation. Here I slept much more soundly than the previous night, until two o'clock in the morning, when I was aroused by Toolo to take my turn on sentry. The sky was very cloudy, and the air hot and oppressive; and a feeling of such intense weariness possessed me, that I had some trouble to keep awake, and to avoid dropping asleep at my post I was compelled to keep moving briskly backwards and forwards. I could see that a storm was brewing, and once or twice I heard the roll of distant thunder. An appalling silence prevailed on all sides. Not a single animal or bird uttered its cry; and the only sounds that I could hear was the buzzing of the musquitos and the heavy breathing of my attendants. Occasionally, at intervals of five minutes

or thereabout, a slight breeze rustled through the tree tops with a hollow soughing sound, that caused an indescribable, melancholy feeling to steal over my mind: indeed, it is impossible for a person to comprehend the solitude of night in the wilderness on such occasions as this, without he has had actual experience of it. One feels miserable, restless, oppressed, and at the same time awed, as his eyes wander about the weird-looking trees and rocks, and the hollow murmur of the approaching tempest breaks upon his ears.

At four o'clock the Australian Billy should have relieved me, but as my drowsiness had worn off by that time I let him sleep on and continued my watch till five, at which hour we generally prepared breakfast. As our fire had been kept in all night, it was but the work of a few minutes to prepare a cup of coffee, which I found exceedingly refreshing; and, I may here remark, that it is astonishing what powers of endurance tea and coffee give to the nerves and muscles. After a cup of tea I could always walk ten or twelve miles, without requiring any other refreshment, and feel little or no fatigue at the end of the journey. Wine and beer, if good, have the same beneficial effects, but, of course, it is impossible for an explorer to carry the latter articles with him. Spirits, notwithstand-

ing what some travellers have said to the contrary, are absolutely necessary in a tropical climate; but they should be used only as a medicine. After long, and excessive fatigue, especially if exposed to the sun, the traveller is laid open to many complaints common in tropical countries, which may be almost invariably kept at bay by the judicious use of spirits, Brandy and chlorodyne are the only efficacious remedies for cholera; and in India I have seen a man suffering from this awful complaint drink off an imperial pint of brandy, and yet show no signs that it had taken any effect upon him.

I was doubtful whether it would be most advisable to proceed, or await the threatened storm in our present position; but as Aboo predicted that it would not break until after noon, we made a start and commenced to ascend the hills, at the foot of which we had passed the night. It was fatiguing work, and caused the perspiration to stream from me. Although the sun was totally obscured and the sky overcast and inky black, the heat was the most suffocating I have ever endured. Three or four times in the space of a minute I was compelled to halt and gasp for breath. A faint breeze still occasionally played amongst the extreme topmost leaves of the trees, but it never moved the under currents

of air; and strange to say, the higher we got, the more close and oppressive the atmosphere became. Upon gaining the summit of the ridge, I ordered the party to halt for an hour, and then we began to descend on the other side.

Twenty minutes afterwards we sighted a party of natives standing round some object on the ground. On coming up to them we found it was one of their number, who had been stung by a scorpion of the large species before described. He was lying on the ground with his eyes shut, seemingly in a comatose state, while one of his companions was sucking the wound, with the object of drawing out the poison. I told Aboo to inform them that I would apply some remedies to the man if they would permit me. They immediately made way for me to step up to the man, and kneeling down beside him, I examined the wound. It was a small bluish puncture, a little larger than the head of a pin, situated upon the thick part of the thigh. It appears the poor fellow had inadvertently sat upon the reptile, and it had stung him through the linen breeches he wore. The Papuans calculate time by the height of the sun in the horizon, so that I could not ascertain accurately how long it was since he had been stung, but as far as I could make out it was about an hour before I saw him. The only remedies that had been tried,

were a few superstitious charms and incantations, and sucking the wound.

I saw that no time was to be lost, so I immediately cut out the wounded part and applied ammonia to the incision: at the same time, with the assistance of Toolo and one of the strangers, I forced a strong dose of ammonia down the patient's throat. Shortly after this he roused up from his lethargy and asked for drink. Water was given to him, and he swallowed about a quart, but brought it up again, and, I concluded the ammonia with it: so I gave him a second dose, and continually applied the spirits of ammonia to the wound. In about a quarter of an hour he again became unconscious, and remained so for half an hour, when he uttered several fearful shrieks, from either horror or agony. For the next hour he kept continually fainting away, and starting up with the most piteous cries and exclamatations. At length a thin, watery, and almost colourless blood, began to flow from his ears, eyes, and nose; and the stench became so intolerable, that it was impossible to remain near him. In another quarter of an hour he was a corrupting corpse, and his comrades buried him with all haste under the tree where he died. Such was the horrible end of this poor fellow. He was a fine powerful-looking lad of nineteen or twenty, and was travelling with his compaions to the coast.

His father and two other relatives were there, and gave way to the most passionate grief: indeed we were all more or less affected by this dreadful occurrence, and it was some weeks before the horror it had excited in my mind wore off.

Sick at heart I bade these people farewell, and proceeded with my party on our way. Ever after when I met with a scorpion I always destroyed it, but I frequently found it no easy task to screw up sufficient courage to approach these loathsome reptiles, so great was my detestation and fear of them. From the information I gleaned from many of the natives, and from what came under my own observation, I believe that the number of deaths that take place in New Guinea through the bites of reptiles is enormous; and by far the greater number are caused by scorpions, though the forests abound with venomous snakes, centipedes, and spiders, whose bite is deadly. The only remedies in vogue with the natives are charms, &c., of the most ridiculous nature. For instance, when a man is bitten or stung they jabber an enchantment, and cause the patient to smell a certain herb. They have also a powder, composed of the dried eyes of fish, which they esteem a certain specific, but upon what grounds none of them can tell. Sometimes they offer a sacrifice of a cock to an imaginary god of serpents and venomous reptiles,

called Naggo in some parts, and Nagpoo in others. They have common sense enough, however, to suck the wound, which in some cases, when the person has not been severely bitten, is successful; but the sting of a scorpion means death within two to ten hours according to the size and strength of the reptile, or the condition of the victim. There is no known remedy; and the death that is inevitable is one of the most awful that it is possible to conceive. The body rapidly becomes a mass of living corruption until the fermented blood finds an outlet through the orifices of the head, and the unfortunate wretch is released from his misery by death.

The country through which we were now passing was a succession of hill and valley; each ridge appearing to bring us to a series of valleys more elevated than the last, so that we were continually rising higher in a northerly direction. Although the heat was so great as to be nearly unendurable, owing to the sun being shut out by the clouds, we were enabled to keep up our march until about two o'clock in the afternoon, when the thunder that had long been rumbling in hollow peals burst just over our heads with a deafening report. We had barely time to gain the shelter of a rock before the tempest broke forth with fearful fury. Although a few minutes previously there had not been a breath of air stirring,

the wind now rushed along with such force that great trees were torn up by the roots; and from others, limbs much thicker than a man's thigh were ripped off with a crack as loud as the report of a small cannon. Parrots were blown out of the trees where they were endeavouring to hide themselves, and beat down to the earth; gravel and stones rose high in the air, and fell in a shower around us; and some of the stones were of sufficient size to prove dangerous. One fell upon Aboo's shoulder, and gave him an awkward cut, from which the blood flowed freely; and we were all nearly blinded by the dust.

The thunder rolled without intermission, and the flashes of lightning appeared to extend over the whole heavens, and were so vivid that, if we happened to be looking in its direction at the moment of explosion, our eyes were pained as though pricked with a pin, and for a full minute afterwards we could see nothing but the reflection of subsequent flashes. Several trees were shivered to atoms within a few yards of our rock; and a thunderbolt fell to the earth so close that we were half suffocated with the sulphurous fumes that arose from it.

A little after three in the afternoon the wind fell, and a tremendous shower of hail came down, many of the stones being as large as a hen's egg. This was followed by a deluge of rain, which speedily soaked

us to the skin; and in a short time the wind sprang up again with redoubled violence.

What with the wet, and what with the great fall in the temperature of the atmosphere (which was 19½°), we were all shaking with cold; and the two Australians were frightened half out of their wits. Indeed, I was far from comfortable myself; for I was in continual apprehension that our arms would attract the electric fluid. Fortunately, we met with no such accident; and the ammunition being carried in water-tight boxes was preserved from the wet.

About six in the evening the rain ceased falling, but it continued to thunder all night; and the wind also did not drop until towards sunrise. We passed a miserable, sleepless night, unable to light a fire for the purpose of drying ourselves and cooking a meal. To obtain a little comfort, we undressed and wrung the water out of our clothes; and by well rubbing our limbs, succeeded in restoring a moderate degree of heat to our bodies.

As soon as there was light enough to guide us on our way, we made a start, marching in a west by north direction, between two low ranges of wooded heights. The valley was full of *débris* of shattered trees and bushes to such an extent that we often had to go out of our way to avoid the mass of tangled creepers and boughs that had been blown down

Hundreds of birds of paradise, parrots, cockatoos, and other birds, together with many monkeys, lay about dead. Amongst them I picked up the body of a pouched squirrel. It was a pretty little creature, about the size of a rat, with a very bushy black tail. Its body was a bluish slate colour, the chest very light grey, and there was a black mark extending from the nose upwards between the ears. The pouch was half full of red berries; but whether this is the only use to which it is put, or whether the young are also carried in it, I have not been able to discover. The animal is scarce, and, I believe, confined to the interior of the island.

Upon crowning an elevation of the ground, Aboo called my attention to a small herd of deer, quietly browsing about a mile in front of us. Desiring the others to keep back, I advanced with Aboo, taking care to always have a clump of bushes or trees between us and our game; and thus we succeeded in getting within three hundred yards of the deer without being observed by them. A nearer approach was rendered impossible by the openness of the ground; but as the deer were slowly moving towards us, we lay down flat behind a fallen tree, and patiently waited until they were within easy shot. It was tantalizing work, for just as they appeared to be coming into our power they several times turned

off again to some patch of herbage that seemed to take their fancy. At length, however, we both fired together, and two deer were struck. One fell, but the other, after a momentary pause, dashed off in rear of its companions. When Danang and the Australians came up, they asked permission to pursue the wounded animal, which I granted, and in a couple of hours they brought it in to our halting place. It had run three or four miles, and when found, was lying down and unable to rise.

We went no further that day, but by daybreak on the 5th we were moving to the north-west over a slightly undulating plain. This morning we came to the first piece of arid-looking land I had seen since my arrival in the island. It was a level tract of about four miles across, thinly sprinkled over with a peculiar, wiry kind of plant, which bore a small, round, white flower, and had an odour something like sage. The soil was sandy, and of a light red colour, and sustained scarcely any vegetation save the plant just mentioned, but animal life was abundant, for in merely walking across I shot three large bustards, a dozen quails, a bird like a snipe, and seven New Guinea hares, as I call them. They are nearly the same as the European hare, but only about half the size, and not quite so long in the legs. The colour of the fur is very dark chestnut. Near the middle of

this desert patch, we killed a large snake, of a harmless kind, common on all open tracts where there is an abundance of ground game. It measured five feet eight inches in length, was of a pale brown colour, beautifully marked with black figures of grotesque form; and over each eye there was a horny projection about half an inch long, from which I named it the horned snake. It feeds upon hares, quails, iguanas, lizards, and any other creature that it can succeed in surprising. Its mode of capturing its prey is to creep up slowly and slyly, until it is near enough to make an effective spring. It seldom misses its victims; but if it does, it never attempts to pursue, as is the habit of most serpents. A very slight blow on the tail disables it, and it never turns on a man when attacked, but makes the most strenuous efforts to escape. The natives, however, seldom molest them, as they are useful in keeping down the vermin; and in many villages they are tamed, and allowed to crawl about the huts.

In this part we were greatly troubled by flies and gnats, which constantly entered our ears and eyes, and stung our faces, causing a most acute pain, which did not wear off until some hours after we had got free from our tormentors. Throughout the whole day, the only water we passed was a small pool that

had evidently collected during the late storm. It was full of frogs, but nevertheless we were very glad to make use of it.

August 6.

We were marching all day over a fine savanna; the grass came up to our shoulders, and walking was warm work. We suffered exceedingly from the heat of the sun, but could not halt, as it was necessary to reach water, of which we were badly in want. In the afternoon we saw a herd of buffalo, of exactly the same species as those found in India; but as we were not in want of meat, we did not attack them. Although we passed close by them, they took no notice, and I was enabled to have a good look at them. The herd numbered about a hundred, including several calves.

Just before sun-down we arrived at a rivulet, thoroughly exhausted. It would seem from the general appearance of this brook that its bed was usually dry; but at present there was a good supply of water, the result of the recent rain.

August 7.

When I awoke this morning, my eyes were swollen up from the insect bites received yesterday,

and I was for nearly an hour bathing them with water before I could see. My servants were similarly inconvenienced. We lay by this day for a rest, and resumed our march at five o'clock on the morning of the 8th.

Myriads of large grasshoppers harboured amongst the grass on the savanna, and kept up an incessant chirping, which, though loud and monotonous, was far from being unpleasant to my ears. They frequently leapt high in the air as we forced our way through the grass, and several alighted on our clothing. They were about an inch and a half in length, thick in the body, and light green in colour, with some black and yellow markings on the back and abdomen. The head was red, the eyes black and very brilliant, and the legs of remarkable length. They were lively in their habits, and when touched sprang a distance of seven or eight yards.

We passed three more herds of buffalo, during the morning, one of which must have contained three or four hundred animals. This part of the savanna had a sprinkling of trees, in one of which a pair of crows had built their nest.

Towards the close of the day we came to three large watercourses, all within a mile of each other. In the last, on the banks of which we halted, there was five feet of water, although in many places it

was so narrow that we could easily jump across. The water was very clear, and we could see the fish in it, principally eels and carp. Aboo soon brought out sufficient to furnish us with an excellent supper. The eels were delicious, but the carp was watery and insipid.

On August the 9th occurred one of the most noteworthy incidents of my journey. By half past eight in the morning we had advanced about twelve miles to the northward in an almost straight line, and I was beginning to think of halting for the remainder of the day. Some rising ground, a short distance to our front, promised us a favourable camping place, and we proceeded towards it in straggling order, I remaining behind with Aboo to watch the movements of a flock of cockatoos that were performing some strange antics on a neighbouring tree. Billy and Danang were the first to reach the crest of the hill, and as they did so, both uttered a shout of surprise, and Billy exclaimed, "De sea! de sea!" I did not comprehend his meaning, and thinking some extraordinary accident had befallen him I ran forward hastily. When I came up, both he and Danang pointed excitedly to the north-west; and there, as far as my vision could travel, stretched a magnificent body of water, sparkling in the brilliant sunlight like liquid gold,

and thickly dotted over with islands, that appeared to be completely covered with the most splendid tropical vegetation. So much was I taken by surprise that for one brief moment I actually thought we had come to an arm of the sea, although we were little more than a hundred miles from the south coast of the island; but the next instant the full importance of my discovery flashed through my mind, and the proud joy that filled my breast none but an explorer can understand. Without the least doubt this wide expanse of water was a lake of very great dimensions; and the conviction excited such enthusiasm within me that I was compelled to give vent to my feelings in a loud and prolonged cheer, in which I was joined by my dusky companions, who seemed to have already imbibed a considerable share of my love of travel and adventure.

Although the heat was 97° in the shade, and rapidly increasing, I was too impatient to wait until the evening, and, accompanied by Aboo, who was always ready to follow me, I made for the shores of the lake, distant about five miles. We accomplished that distance in an hour, but I almost repented of my folly: for I felt so unwell that I feared I had got a touch of sunstroke. To my great relief, however, all unpleasant symptoms wore off during the afternoon. At noon the thermometer stood at 107° in

the shade, and the atmosphere was so calm that even the leaves of the trees were perfectly motionless. During the intense heat of early afternoon a large monkey dropped dead from a tree near us. It was too hot to venture out from our shade at the time, but in the evening, when we picked it up, I could discover no marks upon it to lead to the conclusion that it had met with its death at the hands of its companions. I suppose that it had been overcome by the excessive heat, or, perhaps, had died from natural causes. That there were others in the tree from which it fell is certain, but they were so well hid that we could not discover them.

About six o'clock a fresh breeze sprang up from the west, and the thermometer sank to 94°, and an hour later to 92°. It remained at 90° during the night, the breeze dropping about ten o'clock.

But to return. As soon as Toolo and the rest of the party rejoined us, I made myself a cup of tea, which had a wonderfully refreshing effect upon my nerves. In the cool of the evening I took a ramble for a mile or two along the shore to the northward, and met with a large tree that had been uprooted during the recent storm. It had been eighty-seven feet in height, and the trunk was twenty-two feet in circumference. Several of its largest limbs had been

torn off and blown to a great distance. I found one a hundred and twenty paces from the spot where the trunk lay. Many trees had been blown into the lake, and were floating about on its surface, or lying half submerged on the shore.

Amongst the sedge and tall reeds that fringed the margin of the lake in many places, I found immense numbers of a very pretty little duck, of an entirely new species. It was pure white, with a light green crest, and a ring of the same colour round the neck. I brought down nine of them at a single shot; two of them, however, being only slightly hurt, succeeded in getting away. Harbouring in the same reeds, but much scarcer, there was also a large grey duck, with a rifle-green head and crest, and a bird that I took for a coot. It was half as big again as the common coot, but of the same shape, and in colour was dark brown or dingy black.

The water all along the shore of the lake was literally alive with frogs and newts, which seemed to be a favourite food with the ducks. Some of the frogs were exceedingly large and repulsive-looking, their back being covered with a number of pimples, or inequalities, of a dull yellow colour. Large masses of their spawn was secured to the reeds in an ingenious manner, being laid round the stem

of the reed in a circle, and it was not to be separated without some force. When the frogs were on shore and perched up ready for a leap, they looked like great boulder stones, many of them exceeding in size a large puppy. After sunset they commenced a most execrable noise, more like the bellowing of maddened bulls than the croaking of frogs. Some of the smaller kinds piped as shrilly as a tin whistle; the cry of others resembled the chinking together of pieces of metal.

As I was returning to our camp, I had the good fortune to shoot a beautiful little kingfisher. It was sitting on a snag watching for fish, and fell into the water; but I recovered it without difficulty. Its back was black, spotted with white in such a manner that it appeared as if snow had fallen on it. The head was dark green, with a red band passing around each eye. The throat was crimson, and the breast and abdomen bright sky-blue. The wings were dark green, with a rose-coloured band across them; and the tail was grey with a similar rose-coloured band running across it. The whole plumage had such a gloss upon it that from a short distance the bird had the appearance of being formed of wax. There was a very delicate black crest upon the head, which was not erected when the bird was quiet and at rest. The feet were pale pink, the bill lead colour. From

the base of the beak to the tip of the tail, the bird measured nine inches; the expanse of the wings was fourteen inches.

Reaching the camp, as I term our halting-place, though I need not mention that we had no tent with us, I found that Aboo had been indulging in his favourite amusement of angling, and had landed sufficient fish to stock an old fishwoman's stall. He had captured no less than fifteen different species, individuals of which he had preserved for my examination, though the bulk of those he considered unfit for food he threw back into the water. There were carp, eels, and a large fish resembling a cod; the others were all new to me, and it would take too much space to describe them here. The most remarkable was a fish something the size and shape of a mackerel, but light yellow in colour, spotted on the back with irregular black marks. Another curious fish was furnished with a quantity of stiff bristles round the mouth, arranged in the form of a funnel, and with points as sharp as those of needles. A second had a row of sharp spines down the back, and a third, about the size of a large minnow, was of a bright red colour. But besides these, there were fish in the lake of immense size. Aboo described one that he had seen, that must have been ten or twelve feet in length. I did not credit his statement

at the time, although I had always found him strictly truthful; but at a later date I confirmed it with the evidence of my own eyes.

Neither of my Papuan attendants had ever heard of this lake, nor had they ãny equivalent in their language for the word lake, but called it by the same term as the sea, viz., lara; sounding the *a* as *ar* in far, &c. Their term for a pool of water, large or small, is nee-ta-car; and when I succeeded in making them comprehend, that the immense body of water on the shores of which we stood was surrounded by land like a pool, they called it mash-ar nee-ta-car, or the wonderful pool, and appeared to regard it with a superstitious kind of reverence. Aboo sagaciously told me that he was convinced of the correctness of my statement, that this water was a pool, by its freshness, and by the peculiar kinds of fish he had caught in it; but Danang was for a long time incredulous, and insisted that it was a fresh-water sea, until we laughed him out of that notion, and he became convinced by the weight of testimony.

CHAPTER V.

Beautiful scenery near the lake—Annoyed by monkeys—Small rivers—Herd of small deer—Five shot—Great number of streams—Nest of a trap-door spider—Description of a yagi spider—Mode of seizing its prey—Great heat—The weeping tree—Creeper-covered plain—Dragon-fly and water lizards—Trouble with Billy—I sharpen him up—Barren hills—Crows' nests—Aboo bitten by a small snake—Cold night—Black lizard—A hunting expedition—Duel with a buffalo bull, in which I am nearly killed—Flock of vultures—I become too ill to reach the camp—Am carried thither by my attendants—Try leeches as a remedy—Shift the camp—Toolo and party sent on a hunting excursion—Return successful—Billy doctored—Some more new fish.

August 10.

COMMENCED to advance to the north along the eastern shore of the lake. Most delightful scenery on all sides. The trees of the forest growing on the very brink of the water, and in many places stretching their branches far over its surface. There is no brushwood in this part, but the ground between the trees is covered with soft turf. It would be impossible to exaggerate the beauty and variety of the flowers, and, I may add, of the birds; for we met with a greater number of parrots and cockatoos than I had seen anywhere on the island before.

Some very large black cockatoos, with red crests, were mixing sociably with some of their brethren of white plumage, and making a remarkable contrast. It is singular that almost all the parrot tribes are exceedingly sociable, and I have often seen six or seven different species all sporting together in one flock. We here once more met with our old friend the siskin parrot, in great numbers, and also with the bird of snipe-like appearance, that I have before described.

Whilst marching under some wallah trees, we were maliciously attacked by a large troop of monkeys, who pelted us with the wallah-nuts, and with their excrement, and uttered a wild scream of delight, when they observed that their sudden assault had been successful. A regular volley of the hard nuts fell about our heads and shoulders, with such force, that, being unexpected, we were smitten with dismay, and scrambled out of the way in a very undignified manner. Upon recovering myself, I laughed heartily at the ridiculous figure we had cut, upon which one old fellow, who seemed to be the leader of the troop, ran out on a branch that hung over my head, and deliberately spat down at me with all the gravity of a human being, a trick that I had never known a monkey to perform before. Stepping back a few paces, to get a better aim at him, I

raised my rifle and fired. He appeared to be killed instantly, but sat immovable for several seconds before his body lost its balance and fell. The hubbub that then set in amongst his companions was fearful. They howled at the top of their voice, and seemed to become half mad with rage. They recommenced to pelt us with the nuts, and though we shot several of their number, they refused to desist, but followed us in our march, leaping from tree to tree with great agility. At last we were glad to break into a run in order to escape from them, but this move was unsuccessful, for the monkeys were quite as nimble as we were; so we were compelled to submit to the nuisance for fully three hours, during which period I received so many nuts upon head, back, and shoulders, that I became quite sore, and the light helmet I wore was battered into a highly disreputable shape. At length, much to our gratification, our foes tired themselves out, and gave up the pursuit; but while we remained in sight, they continued to shake their fists with many grimaces, most expressive of defiance and a desire for revenge. At noon this day the thermometer registered 105° in the shade.

Upon resuming our journey after the mid-day rest, we marched round a deep indentation, or bay, of the lake, where a small river emptied itself. It was fordable a short distance from its mouth, and we

had no difficulty in crossing it, the bottom being hard and gravelly: a characteristic that had distinguished all the rivers and streams we had hitherto met with. Whilst we were making preparations to pass the night near this river, a herd of between two and three hundred deer came down to the water on the opposite bank, and proceeded to swim across in a line, one after the other, like a body of soldiers marching in file. So favourable an opportunity of replenishing our larder was not to be lost, and we commenced to fire upon them when about half the herd had crossed. They became very frightened and confused, but continued their passage until all were on the right bank; and we killed five—two of them in the water, and I have no doubt, we could have brought down three or four times that number, but I would not permit of a wanton destruction of them. They were graceful little creatures, weighing not more than forty or fifty pounds each. The colour of their skin on the back and sides was dark drab; underneath white, with a remarkable black triangular mark on the chest. The does were without this mark. The antlers were large, noble looking, and very much branched; and of nearly the same drab colour as the skin. There was scarcely any difference in the size of the male and female, and the latter was quite destitute of horns. In the stomach

of all those we killed, there was a small mass of vegetable fibres, which the animal appeared to be unable to digest, and which was undoubtedly ejected at certain intervals. The masses were of different size, ranging from that of a walnut to that of a small orange, and were nearly round in shape. The meat was tender and well tasted, and eat very much like lamb.

August 11.

In the space of three hours this morning we crossed no less than thirteen streams and rivulets, all emptying themselves into the lake. The country through which they ran was covered with a dense growth of tall trees; but, except in the immediate neighbourhood of the stream, there was little brush-wood, and an almost total absence of creepers. Every few yards we passed huge trees that appeared to have been torn up by the fury of the storm on the 3rd. Monkeys, of the same large species that had attacked us yesterday, were very troublesome again to-day, continually pelting us with wallah nuts, and with matter more offensive. Fearing to exasperate them, we did not fire; and they pursued us for miles, running and leaping from tree to tree with an agility surprising even in monkeys.

Shortly after we had halted for our customary

mid-day rest, Aboo called my attention to the nest of a trap-door spider. It was the size and shape of a round tin canister, such as coffee is carried in; and was firmly secured at the foot of a tree. Whether it was composed of web from the spider's body, or of any other substance, I cannot say; but it had the appearance of being constructed of light, coarse paper, such as grocers use for wrapping up their sugars. It was beautifully and neatly made, and was fastened to the tree by tape-like ligaments seven on either side.

Disturbed at the noise of our approach, the insect had shut down the door of the nest or trap, but in a few minutes it slowly and cautiously opened it again, showing, in so doing, only the ends of two large legs, that might have belonged to a young crab. Aboo having searched about until he had found a small lizard, about two and a half inches in length, fastened it to the end of a stick, and placed it to the opening of the trap. In an instant the two legs appeared, and drew the little reptile in, the door closing almost simultaneously. But as I was anxious to witness what was going on, I tried to force up the trap, an operation that required so much exertion, that I broke it down; and an enormous, yet beautiful, spider immediately ran out, and tried to escape, and it would certainly have got off, so rapid were its

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movements, had not Aboo dexterously pinned it down with a piece of stick. Its body was divided into two parts, like that of the common garden spider. The rear, or abdomen part, was as large as the egg of a pigeon, and of a light cream colour, covered with irregular ring-shaped marks of bright blue. The thorax was larger than a nutmeg, cream colour, with a dusky shade spread over it, and the ring-shaped marks were of a bluish grey. The legs, eight in number, were from five to six inches long, covered with stout hair, and surrounded with blue bands. The head was furnished with two exceedingly large and bright black eyes, and the nippers were nearly half an inch in length. The stretch of the creature, from tip to tip of its longest legs, was more than thirteen inches. In examining it (which we were obliged to do with great care, as it is extremely venomous) the abdomen was accidentally pierced, and a light-coloured jelly-like substance ran out, until the hind part of the body collapsed; yet, after this, the spider ran about with great activity, and almost succeeded in making its escape. The following particulars concerning this variety of spiders were communicated to me by Aboo, but I had at a later period abundant opportunities of confirming by personal observation most of what he affirmed. The native name for it is yagi, and its bite is exceedingly

dangerous, often resulting in death. The best and surest remedy known to the natives, is to cut out the wounded part and suck the blood, but sometimes they content themselves with simply washing the injured part. An hour after being bitten the patient becomes irritable and excited, and his passion rises continually, till at length, seven or eight hours from the time the poison was infused into his system, he becomes a frenzied madman, and it becomes necessary to bind him, to prevent his offering violence to himself or others. If the madness gradually subsides, the patient, as a rule, recovers, but a low fever always sets in, and keeps him down for a week or more. The yagi has also the power of squirting out a highly corrosive liquor, which will cause the skin to blister up as though badly scalded. Lizards are the principal food of this curious spider; but it will devour any small animal or insect that is unfortunate enough to get in its way. The nest is generally placed on the trunk of the tree close to the ground, but occasionally it is found five or six feet up the stem. The lizards, out of fatal curiosity or in search of a hiding place, run to peep into the trap, and are at once secured by the terrible legs, which are furnished with suckers, so that escape is impossible; for the spider would suffer its legs to be torn off rather than let go its hold.

The nest which we found was just large enough to contain the spider's body and legs when contracted, which is the position of the creature while watching for prey, the two fore legs being kept ready either to seize the victim or draw down the door of the trap in the event of danger. The little lizard which had been used as a decoy, was quite dead; but a most careful examination failed to discover any wound or puncture about it. Aboo said that the yagi always seizes its prey by the throat, and that it will sometimes fight with the large scorpion, when the latter attempts to enter its nest; and though the contest generally terminates with the defeat and death of the yagi, it is not invariably so. If the yagi is conqueror, he makes a meal of the vanquished scorpion, and afterwards ejects from the nest such portions as he finds unpalatable. It is the same with the lizard. The spider sucks out all the interior of the body, and leaves the skin and bones unbroken. I found much of such exuviæ on the ground underneath the nest, and also the remains of beetles, large flies, and spiders; for the yagi is an inveterate enemy to other spiders, and even to those of its own species. Two yagis will frequently fight for the possession of a nest, and perhaps the contest will last for several days, the outside yagi maintaining a close siege, and losing no opportunity of making a successful assault.

If he is the stronger of the two he usually succeeds in pulling the other out; but if they are pretty evenly matched, the nest is probably destroyed between them, although it is singularly strong and compact. Wandering yagis are common; but whether they have lost their nest, and are unable to construct another, or are too idle to put themselves to that exertion, is an open question. It is certain that they are much longer in the legs and smaller in the body than the householders, as well as fiercer, and more ready to make a prey of insignificant fry, all which seems to point them out as half-starved vagabonds.

The interior of the nest was beautifully soft and warm, and quite white; its diameter was two and a half inches. The door was affixed by means of three loose ligatures—flat, like those that held the nest to the tree—and in the door itself were two round holes in which the spider could insert its legs to open or close it. When raised the door would remain open of itself, so nicely was it balanced; but upon the slightest touch it immediately fell. Its action was without noise, not the faintest click being audible.

The heat was still excessive, being as high as 112° in the shade, which was the highest degree that I noted during my stay in the island. Great quantities of gum was oozing from the trees; and from one

species it dripped in large drops as if a shower was falling. The ground beneath was covered with it in a melted state, and hot enough to burn the fingers. I called this the weeping tree, as, even in moderately warm weather, the gum drops from its branches in great pellucid tears. This was the first time I met with it, though on some parts of the shore of the lake it is very abundant. It bears a large white flower and a fruit that looks like a small red apple, but of so pungent a flavour that if you merely bite one it will bring tears to the eyes. Wild nutmeg trees were also very numerous in this part.

Owing to the closeness, heat, and our exhausted condition, we did not advance in the evening as usual; but an hour before sunrise on the 12th, we were on the move. As we proceeded, the forest gradually became less dense, until at length we came out upon a plain covered with a low thorny bush, that tore our garments to pieces, and sadly lacerated our flesh. The soil was light and dry, and where the bushes allowed it room to grow, was covered with a creeping plant, twisted and convoluted like tangled twine. Our feet continually caught in this creeper, and were often so shackled by it, that we were obliged to use our knives to get free. Many very pretty green lizards ran out of our way in every

direction, their skins looking, when in the sunlight, as if speckled with gold.

We had met with so many obstacles in the course of our marches, that we had bore off from the shore of the lake nearly five miles; and as I was anxious to pass the night near it, we turned to the west in order to make the shortest cut across. Due north, the country appeared hilly, especially near the lake, where there were some considerable elevations. The intervening ground between us and the hills, was tolerably level, covered with low bushes, and with very few trees growing upon it.

Early in the evening an immense flock of ducks passed close over our heads. Two shots from my double-barrelled fowling piece brought down nineteen of them. They were of the large grey kind, noticed before. Nearer the lake, a white stork and two ibises were bagged. The ibises were black, with a green gloss on the back and wings, and a white band across the latter.

The 13th was spent in rest, and in washing our clothes: an operation performed without the aid of soap and starch, flat-iron and mangle; yet we succeeded in bleaching them whiter than the ladies would easily credit. Next day the Australian, Billy, complained of his feet, and declared he could not walk. I am inclined to think he was suffering from

laziness; but I granted a second day's rest. Not being willing to spend the day in idleness myself, I made a short excursion round about our camp and along the shores of the lake. Aboo went with me, and assisted by him, I was so fortunate as to add several new specimens to the treasures of natural history.

The first was a dragon-fly, captured amongst the sedge of a small brook, about half a mile from the spot where it emptied itself into the lake. The body of the fly was a rich carmine colour, the wings grass green; but the beauty of its appearance, as it flitted about with the brilliant light of a tropical sun playing upon it, I know not how to describe. It was simply superb; the wings glittering with the radiance of a many-coloured jewel. The length of this insect was four inches, the spread of the wings four and a half.

Near the same place we fished out half a dozen water lizards. They were curious little creatures, from four to six inches in length, with muddy, yellow skins covered with rough spines, and a spiny ridge running down the back to the extreme end of the tail, giving them much the appearance of tiny crocodiles. They had large mouths, full of fish-like teeth, and black eyes that moved about in a remarkable manner, becoming fixed every now and then as though the reptile was in a fit. It had the power

of moving them in every direction, so that it could see all round it without turning the head. There were some hundreds of them running about at the bottom of the brook, and I had a good opportunity of studying their habits. I saw one of them seize a small cray-fish, and after biting off all its legs and claws, proceed to leisurely devour the body. Many of them drew very small eels from under the stones, and others were feeding upon snails and slugs. They moved about with great rapidity, and were lively and brisk in their general habits. Upon my making a splash in the water, they disappeared instantly amongst the reeds and sedge on the margin of the brook; but as soon as all was quiet again, first one ventured out, rolling his black eyes about, apparently to ascertain if there was any danger at hand. He was soon joined by another, and then three or four came forth in a body, and resumed their search for food as though nothing had happened. I did not see any of them come to the surface to breathe, but those that we captured were as lively out of the water as in it, and seemed to suffer no inconvenience from want of moisture. After keeping them for a time, as I had no means of preserving them, I gave them their liberty.

The bed of the brook in which these lizards were found, was in some places almost covered with

aquatic plants, and looked like a submerged garden. Blue, yellow, and white flowers were intermixed, and afforded a very pretty and remarkable contrast, much more resembling the handiwork of art than of nature. Where the water was choked up with vegetation, there was an abundance of frogs, but no lizards; on the contrary, where it was clearer and occupied by the lizards, there were no frogs, which seems to show that they do not agree together. The common leech was plentiful in all parts, and very troublesome, crawling up our legs in great numbers, and never failing to find a way to our flesh through some plait in our clothing.

August 15.

Billy still complained of his feet, and of his inability to walk. A hint that his pay might be stopped had no effect upon him, and I ordered the party to march on without him. As on the 12th, we were much retarded by the thorny bushes with which the plain was covered, and having an extra burden to carry with us owing to Billy's absence, we did not get along very well; and by the time the sun's altitude compelled us to halt, we had only ascended half-way up the first range of hills on the northern edge of the plain. Shortly afterwards, we observed Billy, a full mile away, nimbly

making his way towards us. He came and sat down with a broad grin upon his countenance, looking as fresh as a daisy. In the evening, when we prepared to make a second start, he again attempted to lag behind, which caused some grumbling and discontent amongst the others. I saw that it was high time for me to assert my authority; and placing the bundle, which it was Billy's duty to carry before him, I exclaimed, "Now, sir! take up that pack and march." With an impudent and exasperating grin, he answered, "I British subject; I no dog; I no do it. Foot him sore; no walk," and he lay down as though he intended to sleep. Without wasting another word, I took the strap which supported the bundle, and which had a heavy buckle attached to it, and thrashed him, until his cries might have been heard for a league round about. After this, I heard no more of sore feet, and master Billy became wonderfully active and useful all at once; insomuch that I was inclined to regret flogging him so severely; but it was imperatively necessary that discipline should be maintained; for if I had once lost authority, my life would not have been worth a pinch of powder, and in all probability the whole party would have perished, with the exception of the Papuans, who were at home in the country.

A delightfully cool breeze was blowing from off the lake, and although we had up-hill work, we made up for the time lost in the morning. These hills may be called barren. The ground was covered with a short kind of gorse, bearing many small pink flowers, and armed with strong thorns two inches in length, from which we got a smart prick or two about the feet and legs; but it was by no means so troublesome as the prickly bushes. A few dwarfed trees were scattered about, most of them containing a crow's nest. Nearly every isolated tree we passed in all parts of the island contained the nest of this bird; but I never saw two nests in one tree, and there was also a remarkable variation in their size, some nests being as large as a bushel measure, and others no bigger than a jackdaw's.

In the valley between the first and second range of hills there were some patches of tall, coarse grass, in which we found a number of small snakes of two species. One was about eighteen or twenty inches in length, and very thick near the middle of its body. Its colour was light green with a bluish cast on the back, and yellow underneath. Aboo declared it to be harmless, and caught them up in his hand without fear. Holding one carelessly, it bit him in three places, inflicting twelve punctures, four at each part; but he treated the affair with indifference, an-

though his hand and arm became rather inflamed, he was as well as ever the next morning.

The second species was a venomous little wretch of a foot or less in length. It was no thicker than one's little finger, and of a dull red colour, and its bite is inevitable death. From the habit it had of springing at its enemies, it was exceedingly dangerous, and required a quick eye to elude it. It was very tenacious of life, and when cut in two still bit at a stick which was presented at it. Before making a spring, it always curls itself up, and this is the proper time to attack it, as with coolness and quickness, it can be easily destroyed before it has collected sufficient force to shoot forward.

We passed the night at an elevation of four hundred and fifty feet above the surface of the lake. About two in the morning I was awoke by the cold, which caused me to shiver and shake as in the depth of winter. As it was near my time to mount guard, I got up and relieved Danang, and endeavoured to restore the warmth to my body by pacing rapidly backwards and forwards. Unfortunately I did not think of looking at the thermometer till morning, when it was as low as 80°. All through the night there was a stiff breeze blowing from the north-west right across the lake; and Aboo noticed the sudden cold as a very unusual occurrence. Up

to the present time we had never had less than 79° at night, and the average was 86°, but on this particular occasion I feel confident it must have fallen to 60°, which, as we had had over 100° in the daytime, would account for the acute coldness felt.

August 16.

We were in want of meat, having met with no large game during the last few days. The shooting of ducks, quails, &c., necessitated too great an expenditure of ammunition, which it was of the utmost importance to economize. I therefore determined to go in search of deer, and taking Aboo and the Australian Joe with me, I placed the others under the command of Toolo, and ordered them to carry the baggage to the summit of another range of hills, about six miles in advance, where they were to wait until we rejoined them.

Taking an east course along the valley between the two ranges, we soon came to a sort of jungle, formed by bamboos, thorn-bushes, long grass, and a few trees of stunted growth. The place was a regular paradise for snakes. Besides the two species described yesterday, we saw several of the light-brown, horned snake; and lizards were so numerous, that they had actually worn little pathways through the grass and round the bushes. One variety was

new to me. It was only three inches in length, velvety black in colour, and ornamented with a frill round the neck. It frequented the trunks of trees, running over the rough bark and catching the flies with great nimbleness.

This jungle patch ran in a south-east direction for four miles or so, and we then came to a fine park-like plain, where the trees grew in scattered groves at considerable distances from each other. Here New Guinea hares were lying in the grass so thickly together, that we knocked several over with sticks. They are very fleet of foot, but do not stir until you are within a pace or two of them, so that they may be killed without difficulty. We stopped to cook a couple of brace under some tall trees that must have been at least a hundred and fifty feet high. A large flock of black cockatoos had possession of them when we first approached, but they soon flew off to safer quarters.

This appeared to be a likely place to meet with game, but we wandered about all the evening without meeting with any animal of greater size than the hare. I had not anticipated camping out, but we had fortunately brought our blankets with us. The night was cold, but we had plenty of wood at hand, and kept in a blazing fire. I noticed that during these cold nights no dew fell, while, when it was

more than ordinarily warm, there was frequently a sufficient fall to saturate our blankets.

With the first rays of the rising sun we were up and ready to resume our wanderings. Fearing that Toolo would be anxious about us, I despatched Joe to explain the cause of our lengthened absence, and bid him await our return. Meanwhile, Aboo and I commenced to move in a large circle, with the object of searching as great a tract of country as possible, without straying too far from our camp. We worked away vigorously till eight o'clock, when, what with the exertion of walking through the long grass, the heat, and having had no breakfast, we began to feel rather fatigued and desirous of lying by for a rest. Previously to doing so, however, I ascended a hillock and took a look round through my glass. To my great satisfaction, I discovered two herds of buffalo, a couple of miles away, and something less than a mile apart. We were speedily making the best of our way towards them, all fatigue being forgotten in the excitement of the expected sport.

Both herds were nearly the same distance from us, but I selected that on our left, as being the most advantageously situated for attack. We approached to within eighty or a hundred yards of the herd, before they appeared to notice our presence; and then they began to move slowly away, with the exception of

the old bull who led the herd, and who continued to graze as though unconscious of everything but the satisfying of his hunger.

Leaving Aboo to shelter himself behind a bush, I advanced, a few paces at a time, towards the bull, paying no heed to the caution of my attendant. The apparent heedlessness of the animal lulled me into a false security, and induced me to give way to a rash kind of courage. I got to within thirty yards of it, and dropped upon my knee preparatory to firing. Just at that moment the bull raised his head a few inches from the ground, and remained perfectly motionless. I most foolishly hesitated whether I should aim at the head or shoulder, both of which were fully exposed to me, and before I had made up my mind, the brute charged me. I fired, taking the best aim I could under the circumstances; and by throwing myself on one side I managed to avoid the infuriated creature, and, as he rushed past, gave him the contents of the second barrel, under the shoulder as I thought, but as it turned out, through the flank, which of course only served to madden him.

The impetus of his rush was so great, that the bull was carried twenty paces beyond me; but he wheeled instantly, and taking no notice of a shot from Aboo, rushed down upon me more fiercely than in the first charge. I was fairly unnerved, and ran with all my

might to gain the cover of a clump of trees that grew close at hand. I had almost reached them when I felt a terrible shock in the rear, and became aware that I was spinning through the air. I fell on my right side with sufficient force to knock the breath out of me, but providentially I did not lose consciousness, or else my bones would have been left to crumble to dust on that solitary plain, for Taurus had not done with me yet. Before I had time to collect myself and attempt to rise, I felt his feverishly hot breath puffing on my face. He tried hard to gore me, and several times rammed down his head at me with tremendous impulse; but by moving my body quickly to either side, I contrived to escape the blows. My pistol was still in my belt, and I drew it and fired four shots at the bull's head, which had the effect of confusing him a little; but how matters would have ultimately ended is very doubtful, had not Aboo come up and put a bullet through the brute's shoulder, which brought him down across my legs with crushing weight. It was no easy matter to get from under the enormous carcass, even with Aboo's help; and when at length I was released, I could hardly stand, so much was I shaken and bruised. However, no bones were broken, and I had cause to be thankful that I had escaped with my life.

Upon examining the beast we found that the first

ball fired at it had penetrated the head at the root of the right horn; the second had gone through the side near the last rib. The first shot fired by Aboo missed it altogether, his aim being unsteady, owing to his fear of hitting me. The fatal bullet penetrated the heart, producing almost instant death. My rifle, which I had dropped in my flight, we picked up a hundred yards from the spot where the bull was killed.

I was too much hurt to assist Aboo in the operation of skinning and cutting up, but I succeeded in eating a steak which he roasted, or rather toasted on the end of a stick. The beast being too heavy to be turned over by the strength of one man, we did not get the skin entirely off, but were only able to pull it back far enough to enable us to cut a small quantity of the meat. It is remarkable that only ten minutes after the bowels were taken out, a couple of vultures came flopping up in their heavy flight, although we had not seen one for days past. They alighted on the ground close to us, and were constantly joined by others, one or two at a time, until there were fifty or sixty of them. If we threw a stick or clod of earth at them, they hopped up to avoid it, but did not retire an inch. If we threw a piece of meat into the air, one would always leap up and catch it before it reached the ground. When we

retired a little from the carcass, they pounced upon it in a body, and would not loosen their hold until they were struck. I believe we could have captured the whole flock with ease; but they were in too filthy a condition to be handled.

I calculated that we were about ten miles from the camp, and as my pain began to increase, I thought it advisable to get there as quickly as possible, and the heat being moderate, we started soon after four o'clock, Aboo taking with him as much of the beef as he could carry. For the first mile or two I got along very well, but then the pain in my loins become so piercing, that I was compelled to sit down and rest. I made many attempts to resume my journey, but I could only crawl a hundred yards or so at a stretch, and the exertion made me so much worse, that at length I gave in, and Aboo went on alone to procure assistance, first taking the precaution to light a fire near me, and place a supply of wood within my reach.

I recollect watching the sun set, and with that peculiar remembrance of trifling events happening during a sickness, which many persons have, I recall that it was a sunset of remarkable splendour. The whole heavens towards the west appeared to be on fire, and were so glaringly brilliant, that the eye could not bear to dwell on the glory of the scene.

Sunset in tropical regions is always exceedingly grand, and, to my mind, impressive; but this was one of the most glorious natural sights that had met my gaze hitherto. The distant trees and the tall grass were tinged with a golden hue, which became a deep blood-like crimson, as the sun sank beneath the horizon.

Some flocks of cockatoos and parrots flew screaming over my head, followed by pigeons, ducks, storks, and herons, making their way towards the lake. It became dark very suddenly, and after replenishing my fire once or twice, I must have fallen asleep, for I remember nothing till two men stood before me, holding a lantern to my face, and Toolo's voice recalled me to myself. Poor fellow, he had brought brandy and my case of drugs with him. The brandy was very acceptable just then, and revived me considerably. They had found me easily, the light of the fire serving as a guide, though it had nearly burnt out. Wrapping me in my blanket, they carried me between them; Toolo supporting my head and shoulders, and Danang my feet. It was a very dark night, and without the aid of the lantern we should never have got along. I was vexed that the two Australians had not been brought, as although I am a light man, my bearers required relieving, and were obliged to make several halts to rest.

The least motion caused me acute pain, and when my attendants happened to kick against an inequality in the ground, or stumble in the rank herbage, the agony was insupportable, and forced me to cry out. It appeared to me as though my spine was broken near the small of the back, and every now and then, but especially when I was jolted, a shooting pain ran up into my neck and down my arms. I was extremely thankful when Danang exclaimed that we were approaching the camp; and in reply to his loud shout, an answering halloo echoed back. In a few minutes Aboo and the Australians came out, and amongst them I was speedily conveyed to our camping place. By this time it was early morning, and there was already a grey light in the east, betokening the proximity of dawn. Left at rest, I soon became more easy, and fell into a refreshing sleep, which lasted until the sun was high in the heavens.

Upon making an examination of myself, I found my loins in such a state, that I considered it necessary that I should be bled, and sent Aboo in search of leeches. He had not far to go for them, for upon ascertaining that I was likely to be absent for some time, Toolo had not camped on the hill as I had directed him, but had moved into the valley on the north side of it, which was a more favourable position, with a good stream of water running through it.

From this brook any number of leeches could be procured, and I soon had a score fixed on my back and loins, and derived great benefit from them. Besides the injury to my back, I had several wounds about the legs, occasioned by the buffalo treading upon me, and I was much bruised in every part of the body. I have no idea to what height I was tossed, but according to Aboo's account, it must have been at least thirty feet, and from the great shock I came down with, I should imagine he was not far wrong.

August 19.

I was very much better to-day. Had no pains except when I tried to stand up. In the evening I directed another move to the shores of the lake, distant three miles, whither I was carried. We formed a fresh camp here under a clump of teak trees.

On the 20th, Toolo, Danang, and the Australians went out on a hunting excursion. As they were apt to be wasteful of powder, I limited their stock to five rounds per man, permitting Toolo, however, to take a reserve supply to meet any emergency. It was their intention to visit the plains where I had so nearly lost my life, and endeavour to obtain a further supply of buffalo meat.

August 21.

Had a relapse this day, and became so alarmingly

ill about mid-day, that I gave Aboo what I thought were my dying directions as to the disposal of my property and the communicating with my friends; but later in the day I gradually grew easier in mind and body. Aboo was most attentive to me. His rough and almost repulsive exterior covered a heart as kind and considerate as that of any refined gentleman; and had he been one of my own countrymen, I could not have felt greater confidence in him.

August 22.

Very ill and low-spirited all day, and anxious owing to the lengthened absence of Toolo. Aboo applied a vegetable poultice to my loins, which I was to keep on all night.

August 23.

Evidently derived much benefit from the poultice. Between eight and nine o'clock Toolo and party returned, bringing five or six hundred pounds of meat with them. They had slain two buffalos and a deer. All hands were engaged for several hours cutting the meat into strips and drying them in the sun. It was surprising how quickly these strips of flesh became hard and chip-like. Prepared thus, they will keep for a great while, but have to be sodden before use, and are but a poor substitute for fresh meat.

August 24.

So far recovered that I could stand, and walk a few paces, leaning on the arm of one of my attendants. We had another patient in camp. Billy was very unwell, the result of gorging himself with buffalo beef. I gave him a strong dose by way of punishment, and took care that his allowance of meat should be limited in the future.

In the evening I amused myself by fishing in the lake, and in two hours pulled out over a hundred fish, the largest of which was a yard in length. Many large fish broke away from the hook, and I lost several lines. Fish of prodigious size were seen in the water, and one enormous fellow leaped playfully into the air, and fell back with a splash that enabled us to form some judgment of his weight.

Amongst those that I captured was one of the pike family. It was rather more bulky than the common pike, but the head was exactly the same shape, and the back was marked like that of a mackerel, with a dark blue colour. The ground colour was silvery grey, the belly was a pinky white. Another singular fish that I caught resembled the chub in shape, but was from two to three feet in length; and several specimens that I was unable to land were much larger. The back of this fish was of a dark blue colour, the under part of a bluish white,

spotted with black. The sides were intersected by a red line running from the corner of the mouth to the tail, and dividing the dark colour of the back from the lighter parts beneath. On the head there were fourteen bony spikes, arranged like a chevaux-de-frise, pointing upwards. They were rooted in a spongy substance, situated close to the nose, and a very slight touch broke them off; indeed, most of them were so mutilated in landing, but it was possible to ascertain that they all originally possessed the number of fourteen. The length of these spikes was about one inch, and upon examining them through a microscope I discovered that they were tubular, and ejected a colourless fluid when the spongy mass from which they sprung was pressed. I therefore conjecture that the fish had the power of discharging poison through these tubes, either for the capture of its prey or destruction of its enemies.

August 25.

I bestowed upon my discovery the name of Lake Alexandrina, in honour of Her Majesty, thinking that such a magnificent body of water was worthy to receive the name of so noble a lady.

This day the last of the sea-biscuit was consumed, —a trifling circumstance, scarcely worth notice; but it was of moment to me at the time, as henceforth I

was compelled to live almost entirely on animal food, and such fruits and vegetables as we found in our wanderings.

I did not recover strength sufficiently to recommence my journey till the 2nd of September, and even then the exertion of walking caused me great suffering, and four or five weeks elapsed before I was entirely free from pain.

CHAPTER VI.

Thicket of reeds—Billy in a bog—Morass and singular-looking hills—Frogs—Largest island in the lake—Fine view—Hail-storm — Leave the lake — Sandstone hills — Mountainous country—Volcano—Grand sight—Wild nature of the country —Sulphur—Traces of an eruption—Ascend to the crater —The volcano by night—Meteors—Change in the character of the country—Extinct crater—Wild spices and fruit—Long march—Bustards shot—My party reduced to drink blood —Providential shower—Several lakes discovered—Large fungi —Another volcano—Shoot two man-like apes—Description of them—Peculiar moss—Crevices and hollows—Magnificent snake —Lofty peaks—Deep gullies in the side of the range—Terrific position—Description of the mountains—Flocks of finches— Tempest—Miserable night—Height of Mount Hercules— Singular droning caused by flies—Ascent and description of Mount Hercules—Dangerous situation—Intense sufferings.

WE were on the line of march by daybreak on September the 2nd, working our way along the shore of the lake, which was here covered with a thicket of tall reeds and flags, growing to a height of four feet or more above our heads. Crushing through them, with a heavy burden at our backs, was very laborious work, and we soon came to grief. After we had wended our way three or four miles, we came upon a small rivulet, running into the lake with the ground for some distance on either side

in a boggy, rotten state. Billy was leading the way, twenty yards in advance of the others, when he suddenly sank into the mire up to his arm-pits. In floundering about to extricate himself he got farther in, and we were unable to lend him a hand, and he was too frightened to pay attention to my directions. In a very few minutes the mud was over his shoulders, and he began to cry out. Fortunately we had a rope of sufficient length to reach him, but he had become so embedded that the united exertion of three of us did not move him, and he complained that we were pulling him to pieces. I began to be very much alarmed myself; for although we were only ten or twelve feet from him, we were already up to the knees in mud and slush, and it was impossible to get a single pace nearer. It looked as if the poor fellow was about to be smothered before our eyes. In this extremity I determined to run all risks, and prepared to wade in to his help; but Aboo volunteered to go in my stead, and as his personal strength was two or three times greater than mine, I permitted him to do so. We fastened ropes securely round his body, placing pieces of deer-skin to prevent them cutting him, and throwing reeds upon the mud in front of him. This plan was so far successful that he did not sink deeper than his waist, and he succeeded in getting

a firm hold of Billy. We gave way at the ropes at once, but it required a long pull and a strong one to bring them to land, and poor Billy was very nearly exhausted.

As it was quite impossible to advance farther in this direction, we retraced our steps, and turned inland from the lake. We soon found, however, that we could not outflank this bed of reeds, which stretched for miles to the eastward, and apparently marked the bed of an immense morass, bounded on the north by a ridge of singular-looking hills, of a light yellowish appearance, and destitute of vegetation. Close to the lake was a remarkable peak, shaped like a turban with a very high crown. From our position it appeared to be isolated from the range, but had the same general features. The termination of the range to the east was also a very prominent point of several hundred feet in height.

As there seemed to be no prospect of escaping the reeds by a detour, we made a second attempt to pass through them; and this time I led the way, enjoining my followers to observe extreme caution, and not wander right or left of the line marked out by my forcing through the reeds. We got along very well this time, seldom sinking in beyond half-way up the leg, and never deeper than the knees.

The worst place was near the brook, where the ground was in a very shaky condition, and appeared to be composed of rotten peat. Though there was only an inch or two of water in the stream, we were more than an hour in finding a place where it was possible to cross. I should imagine that after much rain this place is wholly impassable.

The number of frogs harbouring amongst these reeds was so great, that we could not avoid treading upon them at almost every step. I am sure that thousands must have perished beneath our feet. Near the stream the ground was covered with them, and their croaking was so noisy that we were obliged to speak to each other in a louder tone than usual, in order to be heard. Indeed, the noise rivalled the hubbub made by parrots. I had not before observed the frogs to croak in the daytime, but the reeds were here so tall and thick that they nearly excluded the light; and, no doubt, the moisture of the place tended to make them more lively than usual.

Nearly the whole day was consumed in clearing this marsh, and we made no halt until we got clear of it, which was between five and six in the evening. We were then not more than two miles from the shore of the lake, and an abundant supply of fresh water being a very desirable luxury, we proceeded thither before we camped down for the

night. From this point I perceived that the hills sloped down to the very edge of the water, and formed apparently, its northern boundary. About a mile and a half or two miles out, was the largest island I had seen in the lake. It was seven miles in length, running nearly parallel with the shore, and thickly clothed with trees, amongst which a great many palms reared their heads far above the rest. Through my glass I saw that the island swarmed with land and water birds. Near the south end was a large heronry, containing many thousand nests.

Sept. 3.

Leaving the turban-shaped hill on our left, we marched straight forward, and in an hour ascended the range directly overlooking the lake, and about three hundred feet above its surface. The view was very fine. I counted sixty-nine islands, large and small, dotted over the lake; and so luxuriously clothed with timber and undergrowth, that they looked like masses of floating vegetation. I could now see, without doubt, that we were approaching the northern shore of the lake. The country was very mountainous, range rising above range, as far as the eye could reach; but none of the peaks would stand any comparison with those that I had met with in the early part of my journey.

After advancing six miles, I felt so unwell that we lay by for the remainder of the day. Between noon and three in the afternoon, we had some heavy hail-storms, accompanied by terrific peals of thunder.

Sept. 4.

Marched in a north-east direction away from Lake Alexandrina, deferring a further survey of its shores until I should be returning towards the south coast. Crossed three low ranges of hills in the space of nine miles. They all appeared of the same character—a kind of yellow sand-stone, thinly covered with tufts of coarse, brown grass. A few quails were the only living creatures we met with upon them. In the valley there was plenty of good grass, and a fair sprinkling of trees.

As we proceeded, the country rapidly became more and more mountainous; and range after range appeared in view, each of greater height than the last; so that when we halted for the night we were hemmed in on all sides.

On the morning of the 5th we commenced the ascent of a very steep range. My observations gave the highest point an elevation of 1597 feet above the level of Lake Alexandrina, which was just visible from the summit. Looking to the north I was surprised to see a dense column of smoke

rising from a far distant mountain. I was convinced without a second glance that it was a volcano, but I was rather astonished that its discovery should have been so sudden: for up to that moment, nothing had occurred to cause the slightest suspicion that we were so near an active volcano. I had not before observed the least trace of smoke in this direction, yet we were now not more than fifteen miles from the mountain, and it was of very large size, sending forth a much larger column of dark-coloured smoke than I have ever seen emitted by any volcano not in a state of erruption. We had a tough day's journey, owing to the hilly nature of the ground; but that night we halted only six miles from it. After dark the sight was grand. The summit glowed with a dull red light, like the reflection of an immense fire. This light must positively have been visible on the shores of the lake, and it is singular that we had not discovered it before. It had a strange effect upon me, filling my soul with an awe that almost amounted to dread. No doubt the weak state of my body had much to do with this feeling; but I am always greatly impressed at the sight of any remarkable phenomenon. It may be thought that it is absurd on my part to record such a trifle as this; but it should also be remembered that I was in the midst of a wild,

uninhabited land, with five followers only; and that under such circumstances a marvellous sight is apt to have a singular effect upon the mind.

There was a great deal of thunder, and extremely vivid lightning throughout the night; and six or seven meteors shot through the southern portion of the heavens. I was in too excited a state to sleep much; and indeed my men were unusually restless, and frequently started up out of their sleep. This was ascribable to the condition of the atmosphere, which was very close, and greatly surcharged with electricity. By half-past three in the morning we were astir, and having partaken of a substantial breakfast, started to make the ascent of our Papuan Etna. The ground here bore unmistakable signs of the vicinity of a volcano. Huge masses of scoria lay about in wild confusion on all sides, in some places piled one upon another, and looking from a distance like the ruins of old buildings. The ground was covered with cinders and ashes, and fine ashes were then falling in sufficient quantities to very quickly dust our clothing over with a whitish powder. The air was filled with a powerful sulphurous odour, which caused us to be troubled with a spasmodic cough. In some sheltered nooks, sulphur had effloresced on the ground, forming a crust of an inch or two thick.

There were many traces of a recent eruption about the surrounding country. Thousands of acres were covered with beds of lava; and streams of it had run down and altered the course of a rivulet near the foot of the mountain. Some of these beds were of great age, but the majority showed signs of having been in a liquid state within a very few months of my visit. Large trees and masses of rock were embedded in many of them; but at the present time, not a vestige of vegetation grew on the sides of the mountain or anywhere near its base. Very few crevices or rents appeared, and those of no great depth or width. The slope of the mountain was steep, but the ground being rough and affording a good foot-hold, the ascent was not dangerous, though it was trying, and made more so by the heat and the suffocating odours. The lava was remarkably brittle, and crumbled to pieces under our tread. Some blocks of it, that we found at an elevation of 800 feet or so, were porous and exactly resembled coral. I suppose that they were decomposed by the action of the weather, but this opinion is entirely conjectural.

We occupied just six hours in ascending to the crater, which was three miles and a quarter in circumference. Its shape was an almost perfect oval, and its sides so perpendicular, that we could not descend

into the basin. The column of smoke that ascended from the centre was enormous, and hung in a dense cloud above, that quite excluded the heavens from our sight. The smell of sulphur was here so strong as to make breathing a difficulty, and we were obliged to shorten our stay in consequence. The rock was everywhere covered with a coating of ashes, mixed largely with sulphur, to a depth of nine or ten inches. When walking, our feet raised a great dust, and the fine particles getting in our eyes, caused an intolerable itching. Rubbing made the eyelids so sore, that we could scarcely keep them open; and yet it was such a luxury to apply the fingers to the irritated organs, that our hands travelled involuntarily to our faces; and a few seconds' ease was purchased at the expense of a ten times worse torment.

In descending we made use of a connecting rope, securely fastened to each man, to guard against the probably fatal effect of a fall of any individual of the party. We were only an hour and twenty minutes in reaching the spot where the luggage had been left, which was near the rivulet mentioned above. It was not a favourable place for camping, and consequently we moved a considerable stretch to the eastward, where we had the protection of some trees, and were not so much annoyed by the unpleasant fumes.

During the night of the 6th, the heavens were lit up by almost continuous lightning of extraordinary brilliancy, but there was no thunder. The fiery glare at the summit of the volcano was not so perceptible as on yester even; but owing to the alteration in our position, it appeared to be much higher; and as the night was too dark to reveal the outline of the mountain, it seemed as though it was suspended in the heavens. The actual height of the mountain, from the base to the crater, was 3117 feet. A little before dawn of day I saw more meteors in the south. This time they fell in a shower twelve or fifteen of them. They were very dazzling, and much faster in their flight than usual.

Sept. 7.

To-day I noticed a marked change in the character of the country. The hills were still formed of a species of sandstone, but it was of darker colour than any I had seen before, and harder. Vegetation was abundant, and the trees were the tallest we had met with since leaving the shores of the lake. Twelve miles north by east from the volcano, we came to a small extinct crater, the shape of an inverted basin, and only 95 feet in height. It was choked up with an impenetrable jungle growth, and had probably not been active for thousands of years.

Its circumference was a little short of one mile. Marching over the ground in its neighbourhood was rendered difficult and tedious, by the number and size of the lava blocks scattered about. There were also immense, irregular masses of rock, lying about in the wildest disorder; much of it half-hidden by the rank vegetation which grew around it. Cloves and nutmegs were here growing in the greatest profusion, and filling the air with a delightful fragrance. We also met with some limes, and a few wallah trees; and a new fruit was discovered, growing on a large bush in sheltered situations. It was as big as an apricot, and pear-shaped. Its colour was a bluish black; but the pulp was reddish and of most delicious flavour.

We marched on late into the evening, in the hope of finding water: for I always preferred, if possible, camping near a stream or large pool, as, in a hot climate, a bath is one of the greatest boons after a long march, besides which, an abundant supply of water is indispensably necessary for the preservation of health. We were compelled, however, to halt under some large banyan trees; having walked, in the course of the day, not less than four or five and twenty miles. I need hardly mention, that we were all pretty well knocked up after such a stretch, and required no rocking to sleep.

Throughout the 8th we were passing over a country whose features were exactly the same as that described yesterday. The craters of two extinct volcanoes were met with, one attaining the height of 477 feet, the other sunk nearly to a level with the high ground that encompassed it. Undoubtedly they had been extinct for ages.

Night arrived and we had found no water. Ever since our sufferings from thirst, which it will be remembered, occurred near the Papuan Ghauts, I had obliged my followers to carry a reasonable supply with them; but our canteens were now drained of the last drop, and our lips and tongues had become so parched as to prevent our speaking with distinctness. At dusk I shot two large bustards, and my men knocked over many hares, for the express purpose of procuring their blood; but painful as were my sufferings, I could not yet bring myself to swallow such revolting drink. It seemed, however, to afford them great relief. About ten o'clock, as if the Almighty had been moved with compassion towards us, and had determined to send us a special deliverance, a heavy shower of rain fell, and continued till midnight. In a very few minutes large pools of water had collected on the ground, and we were enabled not only to quench our thirst, but also to replenish our vessels. Notwithstanding that we were

drenched to the skin, we slept soundly after this God-send: for we were thoroughly tired out.

Sept. 9.

We found this morning that there was plenty of water close at hand, unconscious as we had been of the fact the evening before: for we had not been on the march half an hour when we discovered a lake of about four miles in circumference. Near it we had the good fortune to intercept a herd of small deer, two of which fell before our rifles. It was situated in a valley, and completely shut in by hills, whose elevation ranged from 150 to 400 feet. Five miles north-east we discovered another, which was scarcely larger, however, than a good-sized pond. Two miles further on in the same direction, a third was met with; and this was truly a fine body of water. It was nearly circular in shape, and three or four miles across in every direction. We encamped on its shore, and from its waters procured a fish supper. The species of fish found in it were similar to those caught in Lake Alexandrina; but none of them exceeded twenty-four inches in length.

This lake, like the first discovered, occupied a valley formed by surrounding groups of hills. On its north side there was a peak rising 2000 feet above its surface, and on the west another of over 800 feet

high. Its shores were nearly destitute of trees and shrubs, and large patches of rushes grew upon them, where, as usual, millions of frogs congregated. The water was an intensely deep blue colour; from which circumstance I concluded that the lake was of great depth.

Sept. 10.

Resumed our way early, passing round the south and east shores of the lake. On a narrow and confined plain, we found some enormous fungi, of mushroom-like appearance. They were from eighteen inches to four feet in diameter, and of a salmon colour underneath. Upon breaking them they gave forth a strong rank smell.

The day was cool and showery, and we managed to cover about eighteen miles of ground with tolerable ease; which brought us in sight of a range of very high, snow-capped mountains. Through a telescope, I discovered that one of the peaks was an active volcano, emitting a faint smoke, which was scarcely perceptible; and only rose in a thin column, at intervals of five or six minutes. Still I had no doubt about it. The very shape and appearance of the peak, convinced me that it was a volcano, though none of my companions could perceive the smoke, notwithstanding that I made each one watch atten-

tively through the glass for a considerable time. The distance of the range I computed to be about twenty miles from the spot where I stood, and the intervening country was broken and mountainous; but fairly wooded.

Sept. 11.

We were under the necessity of moving in a winding, circuitous direction, in order to avoid the many hills that lay in our road. Consequently our progress was slow. When we halted at noon we had hardly advanced five miles, though we had marched more than twice that distance. It was a cool day with a brisk breeze from the west, and we were able to continue our march early in the afternoon. As we were wending our way amid some scattered fragments of rock, an animal like a fox ran before us. It was a handsome little creature, of a light-grey colour, with a large bushy tail. I fired at it and missed; but as I was anxious to make an examination of it, not having heard that any such animal was found on the island, I left Toolo in charge of the party, and taking Aboo with me, went to search the wood where it had disappeared. The trees did not grow very thickly in this wood, but there was a dense undergrowth of bushes and shrubs. After beating about for an hour and more, I became con-

vinced that the search was useless, and I was on the point of giving it up, when my attention was attracted by a hoarse, whimpering sound, proceeding from behind a large detached piece of rock. Cautiously approaching, I peeped through the bushes, and saw two monkeys of gigantic size, and the most human-like shape of any that I have ever seen. One—the female—was sitting with her back against the rock, her arms clasped round her legs, and her chin resting upon her knees. The male was gathering the apricot-like fruit recently described, and bringing it to his mate. While she was eating it he bestowed many caresses upon her, uttering the hoarse sound that had arrested my attention, and which seemed to be a note of affection.

Motioning Aboo to aim at the female, I covered the other with my rifle, and we fired simultaneously. The male was killed instantly, but the female ran up a tree with the most horrid outcries, and diabolical distortions of face. A second shot through the chest, brought her down headlong with a crash that shook the ground, but even then she had sufficient strength remaining to get upon her feet; and I had to fire a bullet through her head from my pistol, before she gave up the ghost.

The size of these monkeys was:—the male, five feet three inches from the sole of the foot to the

crown of the head, and forty-two inches round the chest. The female was five feet in length, and thirty-nine inches round the chest. Both were horribly repulsive in feature, yet human-like to an extraordinary degree. The forehead was not so low as in most apes, nor the nose so flat. The eyes were small and deeply sunk in the head. The jaws very powerful and projecting like those of a negro. The lips were rather thick, and the under one turned down in a kind of pout. The skin of the face was very much wrinkled, and of a swarthy brown colour; but there was no hair either on it or on the throat. The hair of the body and limbs was of a dull lead colour, very coarse and short, except on the thighs and hips, where it was two inches in length. On the backs of both it was nearly all worn off, apparently by rubbing against the rocks and trees. The hands and feet were also quite bare. Each hand was provided with four fingers and a thumb, but there were only four toes on each foot. Both fingers and toes were furnished with nails like those of a human being, but of a dark colour. The ears were exceedingly large, and the top of the head covered with short black hair.

Upon opening them, I found a large quantity of masticated vegetable matter in their stomach; and in the womb of the female there was a young one, in

an advanced state of maturity. It was alive, but died very shortly after it was detached from the mother. The male had been shot through the heart, and had bled inwardly, the cavity of his chest being full of blood. The lungs and intestines were like those of a human being, but the brain barely filled a half-pint tin mug. The brain of the female was a trifle the largest. Aboo had seen animals of this species in the forests on the south coast; but always some distance inland, and in the most solitary and unfrequented neighbourhoods. They were by no means numerous, but were considered very dangerous by the natives, who call them tilang-noo, (literally, the wild madman) because their cry is thought to resemble the whimpering of an idiot.

I was vexed that I could not bring away the skins of these monkeys, but my party was already overburdened; and it was impossible for us to carry a heavy load through a desert and rough country: so leaving the dead bodies to become the prey of vultures, we hastened to rejoin our companions, whom we found halted and waiting for us near a convenient camping place, where we passed the night. About sunset we had a smart shower of rain which thoroughly drenched us, and caused us to shake with cold.

Sept. 13.

The long marches of the last few days were beginning to tell upon us; I therefore granted a rest till evening. This morning we all saw a thin, vapour-like smoke, arising from the volcano at short intervals. It was visible even to the naked eye, and through a glass was revealed with convincing distinctness. The mountain range, of which this volcano was one of the highest peaks, was truly a grand and imposing chain; but unlike the Papuan Ghauts, it was not characterized by many prominent points. It was, however, a much loftier range, as will be seen presently.

During our march in the evening, I was much struck with some beautiful and delicate moss, growing on the rock. It looked like green feathers, and the fronds were tinged with red, blue, and yellow. It grew to the height of three or four inches, and the rocks, and in some places the ground, were covered with it; forming a soft, springy carpet for our feet, that was quite a luxury after the hard sandstone over which we had been accustomed to tramp lately.

We were soon obliged to change our direction, and move east or west, parallel with the mountain chain, in search of a break in the barrier that would enable us to gain the northern side, and continue our pro-

gress across the island. The western route appearing to be the most promising, I chose it, and we halted for the night.

Next morning we were on the move long before our lively friends the parrots had commenced their noisy commotion; and the weather being favourable —that is to say, not too warm—we had accomplished a tidy stroke of work by nine o'clock. My principal labour had been to take a few measurements, and ascertain the height of the volcano, which I called Mount Vulcan for want of a more appropriate name. I give it an elevation of 16,743 feet above the sea.

We were much retarded by the great number of crevices and precipitous hollows, that rent the ground in every direction. In order to avoid them, it was necessary to make long and fatiguing detours; so that in advancing one mile forward, we had to walk at least two. These fissures had most certainly been created by earthquakes of ancient date. Most of them were partially filled up, and their sides and bottoms covered with trees and vegetation. They were surprisingly full of snakes and other reptiles, who must have crawled in, and being unable to get out again, owing to the steepness of the sides. As I stood on the brink, I saw serpents of most resplendent colours, winding in and out amongst the bushes and

rank grass. One big fellow lay curled up, and apparently asleep. His body was a dingy black, magnificently mottled with scarlet. Whilst I was watching and admiring him, a large lizard ran close by In an instant sufficient of the gorgeous body was unfolded to enable him to reach and seize the poor wretch. For one moment he held it in his mouth, and then with a gulp it was gone; and the monster again curled up and composed himself to rest as before. In a short time another lizard came near and met with a similar fate. I then took up a large piece of rock and threw it right upon the creature. With lightning-like rapidity he uncoiled himself, and springing completely off the ground, dashed away out of sight, hissing dreadfully the meanwhile. The length of this serpent I should say, at a rough guess, was seven or eight feet; and it was thicker round than a man's leg.

Ten miles west by south of Mount Vulcan was a singular detached mountain, of pyramidal shape, and 15,091 feet high. I bestowed upon it the appellation of the Outpost, from its peculiar position. It compelled us to alter our course, and perform a circuitous march of eleven miles. Upon rounding it we discovered another peak of far greater height, situated behind a wall-like ridge, and distant about twenty-five or thirty miles. I could not determine whether

the ridge that ran betwixt us and it was the main chain or a branch from it. It had a west by south direction, and appeared to be accessible abreast of us. I resolved that the next day we would make an attempt to pass it.

Sept. 14.

Moving in a diagonal direction, we left the Outpost a little to the right, and after crossing a few low, wooded hills, struck the bed of a deep gully that ran up the face of the ridge, and afforded us a ready and easy means of ascent. There were many such gullies at various points, evidently worn by the rain pouring down the sides of the mountains. In the bed of the one we selected as the most likely to answer our purpose of ascending at the lowest angle, there were masses of rock, washed down by the torrent, and large round pebbles as big as one's head. These last were quite a novelty, as hitherto we had scarcely seen a pebble larger than a marble. Great tree trunks and vast heaps of drifted matter almost obstructed the way in some parts; and in others were piled up to the height of ten or twelve feet. After half-an-hour's hard labour, we came to a part of the gully that was cut out so deeply, that had we been desirous to get out of it, we could not have done so. We were in a regular trap, and the prospect was terrific: for

above the crags hung over our heads so much that in places we could not see the sky. If I stood still for a few minutes and looked steadfastly up, the dizziness of my head, communicating itself to the eyes seemed to give the rocks a motion as if they were falling, and I involuntarily shrunk down to protect myself. The course of the gully being very irregular and tortuous, we could never see very far either before or behind, and sometimes it was so narrow that three of us could not walk abreast.

The primary formation of the rocks appeared to be quartz, of a very dark colour. Up to a height of two thousand feet the sides were covered with vegetable mould to a depth of three or four feet at first, but gradually dwindling down till we came to the bare rock. Trees grew up to three thousand feet, and one species of pine was found at the summit. Mosses and lichens, and a kind of coarse grass, growing in tufts, which we had often met with before, were found growing in all parts, even on the perpendicular faces of the rocks. The small blue flower seen on the Papuan Ghauts, and a very pretty red one, something like a geranium, were also abundant.

When we had ascended two thousand five hundred feet, we left the bed of the gully, and struck out a path for ourselves. The ascent was

not so steep as I had expected to find it, and we got along with encouraging rapidity. By ten o'clock we had crossed the summit at a height of four thousand seven hundred and sixty-two feet, and were descending on the other side. My ardour was somewhat damped, however, by observing that there was still a range equal in elevation to that we were now on, lying midway between us and the mountain we were making for; but resuming our exertions we succeeded in crossing it before night-fall. Its features were precisely the same as those of the last range. Near the top I shot a small brown finch, beautifully marked on the chest with crimson spot. Many of the same species were flying about the pine trees, in flocks of eighteen or twenty. They were very shy, and when disturbed uttered a shrill, quick note of alarm, upon which they took wing and made off to safer quarters. In the valleys the remains of volcanic disturbances were very abundant, and the cinders were piled up in great heaps as if by the hand of man.

At night when we halted, we appeared to be not more than seven or eight miles from the base of the lofty peak, towards which we were wending our way; but its summit was hid from view by dense masses of clouds. From ten o'clock till half-past eleven there was an awfully grand tempest. It commenced sud-

denly with a drenching shower of rain, followed by hail, with thunder and lightning. At every flash of the electric fluid, the whole of the surrounding country was revealed to our eyes with as much distinction as at noonday; and the repeated roaring and echoing of the thunder amongst the hills was terrific, and sounded as if the rocks themselves were rolling into the valleys beneath.

The storm subsided almost as suddenly as it had come on, leaving us drenched to the skin and miserably cold. The rain had put out our fire, and the fuel in the neighbourhood was too wet to ignite, to say nothing of the difficulty of finding it: for there was no moon, and a inky darkness reigned above, not even a star being visible. Our only means of keeping heat in our bodies, was to sit close together in a circle, with our backs to a tree; and in this wretched fashion we alternately shivered and dozed, till daylight enabled us to find materials for a fire, and a hot meal set us to rights.

All the forenoon was occupied in making preparations for the ascent of the mountain, whose summit was still enveloped in clouds. But nevertheless, I could form some idea of its vast dimensions and height, from the broadness of its base, and the distant views I had had of it. I calculated that it was 30,000 feet high: it proved to be 32,783 feet above

the sea level, or 30,901 feet above the surrounding country. It is by far the highest mountain known. High mountains as a rule, rise from elevated or table land, and they are often less than one half as high as their maximum height above the sea; but it is not so with Mount Hercules, as I named it. For the plains in its neighbourhood are less than two thousand feet above the sea, and many of the valleys are several hundred feet lower than the plains; so that it rises in the full grandeur of its height, dwarfing the chains of mountains that run along its southern side, and frowning over the level country to the northward, like the watch-tower of some huge giant. A thick forest runs round the eastern and northern sides of its base, and a short distance up the slopes. On the south it is attached to the central chain.

The forest I designated the Forest of Hercules. In the evening, while we were marching through it, my attention was attracted by a droning kind of noise, proceeding from the right side of our path. My curiosity being excited, I went in search of the cause of it, and found the droners were myriads of tiny green flies, swarming amid the branches of a tree. As soon as I appeared I was completely enveloped by a cloud of them, and was glad to beat a retreat. I afterwards caught several of the flies upon my clothing. They were the same shape as

the common house fly, about half the size of a barley corn and of a light green colour, with blue bands round the body. The noise made by these little insects was astonishing: indeed, had I heard it in England, I should have imagined it was the droning of a steam threshing machine.

We halted at the foot of Mount Hercules, by a small pool of water collected in a rocky hollow. At sunset five deer came to drink, and three of them met with an untimely fate. As we had run out of fresh meat, and had nothing in store but a couple of monkeys, which we had knocked over on the road, their arrival was most opportune. Since the last of my biscuit had gone, we had been living entirely on animal food and fruit. I felt the want of bread or grain greatly, but it was a want I was forced to endure.

Sept. 16.

Commenced the ascent soon after four o'clock. Toolo and Danang, with the two Australians, were left behind, and I took Aboo only with me. We carried with us a supply of food and water, our arms and blankets, and a stout staff each. The first part of our way lay through the forest, but the trees gradually became less thick together, and at a height of two thousand feet they were very

sparsely scattered about, though there was still plenty of scrubby undergrowth, and a sufficient quantity of coarse grass to impede our progress. On the outskirts of the forest many large eagles were seen, one of them carrying some small animal in its talons. A few lizards were here also, scared from our path, together with a brown horned snake, about five feet in length, and a few quails. The latter were met with as high up as four thousand feet.

The soil, which was not found, except in odd patches, at a greater height than six thousand feet, was of a stiff nature, but I cannot speak of its quality. As far as it extended it was covered with grass and herbage, and a few pines and other trees. Pines of four different kinds grew on the bare rock, where there was no soil at all, their roots running into every little fissure and crevice that was capable of affording them a holdfast. Volcanic debris was not very abundant, but still we met with a few blocks of lava and masses of broken rock. Such signs of the vicinity of volcanoes were very rare at a greater height than eight thousand feet, and were not observed at all after twelve thousand feet.

Shortly after sunrise, the sight over the country to the north and north-east was grand in the extreme. In those directions it was a nearly level plain, and we could scan its surface for at least forty miles

around. Another large lake lay north, slightly west, about twelve miles; and half-a-dozen streams of water were traceable running in a north-west direction. Near the base of the mountain, and away to the westward, the ground was covered with forests of immense extent, but due north it was a fine sávanna, where, through a glass, I could make out many herds of cattle grazing amidst the tall grass. One of the most prominent objects on this plain was a grove of palm trees, growing probably on the margin of a pool or small lake.

Continuing the ascent we soon got above the clouds, and this beautiful panoramic view was lost to sight. It was somewhat curious to look down and perceive a creamy looking white mist below us; and then directing our gaze aloft, to find a similar canopy hanging over our heads. The sun's rays were now shut out, and it was getting very chilly. The atmosphere had a dull, over-cast look, as if a heavy rain was about to set in; in fact, the weather was just such as we have in England on a raw November morning.

By nine o'clock we had ascended fourteen thousand feet, having so far met with no serious difficulty. Even at this great height we found a few species of moss. The last trees (a dwarfed pine or two) were passed at eleven thousand feet; and a little higher the

grass ceased. Between ten and fourteen thousand feet the rock was dangerously slippery, owing to a kind of slimy moss that grew upon it. I was compelled to take off my shoes, and Aboo his sandals, in order to maintain a footing. At the height of fifteen thousand feet we came to the first snow, it was two or three inches thick, and frozen very hard, but with the aid of our staves we got over it with comparative ease. Hitherto, though the side of the mountain had been steep, it was not rough, or broken much by cliffs and gullies, but at this point crag rose above crag, with such abruptness, that frequently we had to climb up an almost perpendicular face. In doing so masses of the rock sometimes gave way under our weight, and we received some ugly falls in consequence. By eleven o'clock we were pretty well tired out, and halted for a rest and a little refreshment. While we were eating, Aboo fell asleep, and I was myself so drowsy that it was no easy task to keep my eyes open. As I knew full well, however, that in our present position sleep and death were synonymous, I awoke Aboo at once, and proceeded upward.

The cold now shortly became excessive, and our desire to sleep increased with it. The thermometer fell twelve degrees below freezing-point, my hands were so numb that I could not feel whether I had

fingers or not, and the water in our bottle was a mass of ice. Unfortunately we had very little extra clothing, with the exception of our blankets, and consequently we felt the coldness of the atmosphere most acutely. Aboo became quite lethargic, and several times sat down and fell asleep instantly, and so soundly that I was obliged to use rough means to awaken him. But in defiance of all drawbacks we held on our way, walking, and in some places crawling, over frozen snow of unsearchable depth. Nothing was visible but snow of the most dazzling whiteness. Every peak and crag was covered with it, and it hung over the edges of the cliffs in long fleecy masses. Beneath, and above, and on either side, as far as I could see, nothing but snow, arranged in all manner of fantastic patterns, like the frosting on the top of a gigantic bride-cake. Some of the enveloped crags looked like ruined churches and fortresses, and one was remarkably like a bare rampart. My eyes grew weary and pained with wandering over it, and I closed them to obtain ease, but immediately I began to stagger in sleep, and had not the shock of my fall aroused me I should certainly never have seen the foot of Mount Hercules again. Aboo moved along mechanically, like a man in a dream, and if I spoke to him I had to

repeat my remark five or six times before he heard or comprehended me.

At length blood began to flow from our noses and ears, and my head ached in a distracting manner. Aboo, also, complained of a headache, and entreated me to let him sit down and rest. With much trouble I restrained him from so doing, for I knew that if we halted sleep could not be resisted. As it was, I saw that our only chance of preserving life was to retreat without delay; for we were in a pitiful plight. Our lips and gums, and the skin of our hands and faces, were cracked and bleeding, and our eyes were bloodshot and swollen to an alarming extent. The thermometer had sunk to twenty-two degrees below the freezing-point, and the air was so rarified that we were gasping rather than breathing. Our staves fell from our grasp, and we could not pick them up again, so benumbed were our arms and hands. It was now one o'clock, and the greatest elevation we had attained was twenty-five thousand three hundred and fourteen feet. It took us three hours to descend to the limit of the snow; but after that point was reached we pushed forward more rapidly. As soon as I had recovered the use of my hands sufficiently to hold the flask, I served out a little brandy, which put new life into us. Just

before we left the boundary of the snow, three large white eagles were seen; and many black ones as high up as the limit of trees. We arrived at our camp about half-past seven in the evening thoroughly beat.

CHAPTER VII.

Wild honey—A moolah seen—Wounded by Toolo—The game tracked—A desperate fight with the beast—Description of the New Guinea tiger—Gourds—Mount Hercules at sunset—Immense flocks of parrots—Pestered with insects—Impeded by the long grass—Rivers—Dead buffalo and ostrich—Intense heat—Extensive fire on the plain—Curious little animal—Driven from our position by the smoke—Buffalo Lake—Continue to advance across the plain—Large numbers of buffalo seen—Toolo affected by the sun—Arrive at a putrid pool—Toolo shows signs of madness—A night march—The River Gladstone—Interrupted by a crocodile—Cross the river on a raft—Description of the Gladstone and country near it—Laughable conduct of a crocodile—Toolo attempts to murder Billy—Adventure with two moolahs—Dense forest—Discovery of the Royal—Suicide of Toolo—Toolo's grave.

We made no movement the following day, for Aboo and myself, besides being excessively tired, were quite crippled in the feet. The snow had caused great cracks or chaps in the flesh, which bled freely, and gave us much trouble. But time was too valuable to be lost, and in spite of our severe sufferings, we moved off on the morning of the 18th, shaping our course due north. Our road lay through the forest, which was so close that we were obliged to have constant recourse to the compass for guid-

ance. From one of the trees we procured a bee's nest, containing about twenty pounds of excellent honey. It was larger than a bushel measure, fixed between the forks of a large branch thirty feet or so from the ground, and looked as though constructed of brown paper. The bees did not give up their property without a struggle. Most of us got stung, and half an hour was consumed in smoking them out; but the prize was well worth the trouble. Indeed, it was quite an important find, and added a delicious luxury to our somewhat scantily furnished larder.

In the course of the evening we reached the confines of the forest, and as by this time Aboo and myself could barely limp along, I ordered a halt and supper. While we were preparing the latter, Toolo and Joe went in search of wallah-nuts, but quickly returned with scared countenances, declaring they had seen a tiger. Taking my double-barrelled rifle, I ordered a sharp look out to be maintained, and directing Toolo to follow me with a spare rifle, I proceeded towards the spot where the beast had been seen, and carefully examined the bush all round it; but the only trace I discovered was a few foot-marks, about the size and like those of a tiger. Concluding that the animal had retired, I gave up the search, and began to make my way back to the

startled by hearing the report of a rifle, followed by loud shouts and cries from my men. Thinking the camp had been attacked by a moolah or other wild beast, I hastily ran back, stripped as I was. The first object that met my sight was the body of poor Toolo, lying on the ground with his head shattered to pieces. He had taken his rifle in the presence of the others, and, before they could prevent him, had placed the muzzle in his mouth and discharged it by setting his toe on the trigger. Nearly the whole of the head was blown away, and death, of course, must have been instantaneous. When I had left him a few minutes before, he appeared cheerful, and in such good health that I made quite sure he had recovered from the effects of the sunstroke. But I am convinced that if he had been in his right mind he would not have committed the rash act which deprived him of his life.

This sad affair had such an effect upon me that I became quite ill, and almost lost heart. The poor fellow had been in my service nearly three years, and shared so many of my hardships and adventures, that I had grown to look upon and treat him more like a companion and friend than a servant. On his part he had always been most faithful in the discharge of his duties, and showed that remarkable attachment to my person which is so often found in

natives of the East towards those who have treated them with kindness. Previous to the unfortunate accident which affected his reason, I have no recollection that an angry word passed between us.

The disposal of the body was a difficulty that troubled me greatly. We had no tools with which to dig a grave, and my mind revolted from the thought of throwing the poor fellow into the river to become meat for the crocodiles. After great labour we succeeded in scraping out a shallow hollow, about a hundred and fifty yards from the spot where he fell. Here in the evening we buried him, wrapped in his blanket. On a tree at the head of the grave I cut the following inscription in large letters, and as deeply as I could: "Toolo. Died S. 29, 1872." We did not move away from the place until the next morning.

nutely searching the cover, shouting and throwing stones in the hopes of inducing the moolah to betray his whereabouts; but after sweeping the ravine in this manner from end to end, I began to doubt whether it had not slipped away from us, and proposed that we should endeavour to find the track further on. But Aboo stubbornly maintained that the moolah could not be far away. It never wandered, he said, to any great distance from its lair; and he scouted the idea of its flying in fright at our approach. Only partly convinced of the correctness of his argument, I consented to continue the search round the outskirts of the ravine. Aboo and Billy moved to the left, Toolo and myself to the right, with the intention of performing a sort of circle, and meeting again at the opposite end.

In about a quarter of an hour I was alarmed by hearing the report of two shots, accompanied by shouts. I ran off at once across the ravine, followed closely by Toolo, and in my hurry and excitement I tripped and fell several times, through getting my feet entangled in the creepers. In less than five minutes I came up with Aboo, who was standing watching a grotto-like mass of rock, behind which he said the moolah had taken refuge. They had seen and fired upon it, but it had made no attempt to attack them. After discharging his piece, Billy had secured the safety

of his person by climbing a tree, and he was very loath to come down; but a threat to pepper him with a few small shot accelerated his movements, and soon brought him to terra firma. Seeing he was in a very frightened state, I deprived him of his rifle to prevent accidents, but made him do duty as a beater.

For a time we were at a standstill. No one cared to approach the spot where the moolah was supposed to be lurking, and the beast seemed to be equally reluctant to commence the attack. Stone-throwing and shouting had no effect whatever; and at last I lost patience, and ventured to cautiously creep towards the grotto, moving by degrees a foot or less at a time, and keeping my weather eye open for fear of a squall. When I had approached to within ten or twelve yards, I could see the cunning brute's eyes glaring from out of a dim recess formed by the overhanging creepers and plants. Every now and then he gave a knowing blink, and a whisking motion showed that his tail was sweeping from side to side. He was evidently preparing for a spring, but he delayed it a little too long; for, raising my rifle, I brought the sight to bear between his eyes, and fired. With a horrible, barking kind of noise, he came tumbling out, and received the contents of the second barrel behind the shoulder. It diverted him from his intended attack upon me, but though badly hurt,

he made straight for my followers, who dispersed without firing a shot; Billy mounting his tree with the agility of a monkey.

Finding himself distanced, the moolah, who had lost the use of one of his fore legs, turned back, and again came towards me, before I had time to ram home a bullet. There was nothing left for it but to run, and run I did till I went sprawling over a fallen tree trunk. Before I could rise the beast was upon me, and with a growl of satisfaction and anticipated vengeance as I thought, took me into his clutches. I had a long dagger-knife in my waist belt, and I drew it with all speed, and fright lending me more than my usual strength, I drove it up to the hilt in the creature's side. Turning savagely on feeling the pain, it seized the knife in its powerful jaws and broke it. It was its last act, for immediately it fell dead without a groan; and with great relief of mind I extricated myself from under the carcase.

Upon hearing my call, my companions came up. They were rather alarmed, for I was drenched with the moolah's blood, and I have no doubt cut a ghastly figure; but they soon regained their courage when they saw the dead body, and were convinced that they had nothing to fear personally. With the exception of a few trifling bruises and scratches from the animal's claws, I was unhurt. My escape was

certainly remarkable, and a cause for great gratitude toward the Almighty.

This animal was formed exactly like the Indian tiger, nor was it inferior in size; but it was a much handsomer creature. It was marked with black and chestnut stripes, on a white, or nearly white, ground. Its length from the nose to the root of the tail was seven feet three inches. My first shot had been badly aimed. Instead of striking between the eyes, it had entered the throat. The second bullet had smashed the right shoulder, and passed completely through to the other side. The shot fired by Toolo on the previous evening, had penetrated the fleshy part of the thigh. The wound had been much licked by the animal, and seemed to be in a fair way of healing rapidly. In India, I have heard it repeatedly stated, that if a tiger is wounded never so slightly, he will lick the injured part until it festers and so destroy himself. This does not appear to hold good with regard to the New Guinea tiger: for the wound was perfectly clean and free from fester. The skin was so beautiful, that I could not make up my mind to leave it to rot; and accordingly we brought it away. Aboo dressed it for me in the native way; and it was one of the very few articles I succeeded in preserving and bringing to Europe.

By the time we had returned to camp, the sun was

high in the heavens, and of course our journey was not resumed till evening. During our absence Danang had shot a fine deer, and was busy drying the flesh in the sun. He assured us that while he was wandering about in the woods near our camp, he had seen two other moolahs, but had not ventured to attack them. Under these circumstances I deemed it advisable to forbid straggling.

We were greatly refreshed by some gourds that grew in this neighbourhood. They were the size of one's fist, and the colour of a capsicum externally. Upon cutting them open they appeared of a deep salmon colour. Though rather watery, the fruit had a pleasant, sweetish taste; and allayed thirst most effectually. We found them even more invigorating than water. The vine which bore them was a creeper, with large, ivy-shaped leaves. Many of them ran along the ground for a distance of twenty or thirty feet; shooting out runners in every direction, and bearing over a hundred gourds.

On the decline of the sun, we marched nine or ten miles across the plain. Sunset was remarkably beautiful, and the appearance of Mount Hercules, as its deep crimson rays reflected from the sides and snow-capped summit of the mighty mountain, was sublime. At twilight an enormous flock of parrots flew over our heads. They extended for fully two miles, and

the whirring of their wings caused a very great noise. The direction of their flight was west by south, and they were probably making for the extensive forests that lay in that quarter.

We passed the night on the open savanna, wrapped in our blankets, and with the baggage packs for pillows. I obtained but little rest: for the insects were tormenting to a maddening degree. They particularly attacked the unhealed chaps upon my hands and legs, producing great irritation and pain. It is singular that all my men escaped these troublesome pests, and enjoyed a good night's rest.

Sept. 20.

The grass was five feet high in most places, and was an impediment to our progress. We were under the necessity of lifting our feet very high to avoid tripping—an exercise that speedily told upon our knee joints. About seven o'clock we came to a river of such breadth and depth, that our only means of crossing it was by swimming. In the space of an hour and a half we crossed two others that were fordable, though in places they contained six and seven feet of water. All these had a north-east course with few bends or windings. Plenty of crocodiles were seen in them, which rendered the passage a ticklish business. On the banks of the third one lay the putrid and half-devoured carcase of a buffalo,

with five or six vultures busily tearing at it. Whether this beast had died a natural death, or had eaten some poisonous herbage and come down to the water to drink and die I cannot say: it certainly had not met its death at the hand of man. A couple of hundred yards higher up the stream, and on the opposite bank, I found the skeleton of a large bird of the ostrich kind, and the empty shells of several water-tortoises. These circumstances combined suggested a name for the stream, and I accordingly called it the River Death. Upon the first and largest I bestowed my own name, and the second I denominated the River Arrow, from the straightness of its course. The banks of all of them were more or less covered with bushes and palm trees; and abundance of fish bred in their waters.

There was a greater degree of heat to-day than there had been since my landing in the island. At noon the thermometer stood at 115° in the shade; and the lassitude of my party was extreme. They lay on the ground with the perspiration pouring from every pore, and nothing but the desire for drink could induce them to move. I myself suffered the least of any of the party; but, perhaps, this is accounted for by the fact that I used tea, while the others drank nothing but cold water.

Between three and four in the afternoon the grass

took fire in three different places, and burnt with great rapidity and fierceness; but as we were on the opposite side of the river I apprehended no danger. Hundreds of frightened snakes came down to the water and swam across; only, however, to be knocked on the head by my followers, who killed scores of them. They were from two to seven feet in length, and some of them were venomous. Amongst the other creatures driven out by the fire, was a curious little animal, the size of a large rat. Its body was very thick, and the limbs short and stout, and furnished with strong claws. The head was short and round, the eyes rather large and jet black, the ears also large, and the shape of those of a squirrel. The mouth was very small and without teeth, nor could I discover any substitute for them. The nostrils would scarcely admit the head of a pin, and were placed very far apart. The colour of the animal was a dingy grey, inclining to black on the back; and the fur was beautifully fine and soft. In my opinion the little creature was formed for burrowing. I obtained but the one specimen, and that was drowned in attempting to swim across the river.

As the fire approached the margin of the water the smoke blew into our faces and almost suffocated us. There was no alternative but to shift our quarters; and forth we tramped, with the scorching sun beating

mercilessly down upon our heads and shoulders. A couple of miles to our right, a very large herd of buffalo was careering madly over the plain; but fortunately they chose a course wide of us. The grass, which in the early morning had looked quite fresh and green, was now faded and dry, and evidently ready to burn like tinder, upon the application of a spark.

There were no trees except near the river; consequently, long before we reached a shaded spot, the sun had lost most of his power; and we continued on our way till nearly eight o'clock, by which time we had arrived on the shore of the largest of the lakes seen from Mount Hercules. It was of oblong form, eight miles in length, by from three to five in width. Of course these measurements are merely rough calculations, as I could not spare the time necessary for an accurate survey; but they may be relied upon as moderately correct. I bestowed upon it the appellation of Buffalo Lake, several herds of that animal having been seen near it. Not a single tree or bush was found on its shores, and we could not even procure fuel for a fire.

The grass was still burning behind us, and the flames were rapidly spreading to the west, the wind having shifted to that quarter. Throughout the night they continued to rage, lighting up the heavens with a vivid red glare. In the morning the fire

appeared to have burnt itself out, but clouds of black smoke were ascending from the ground.

Leaving Buffalo Lake, we moved northward. By eight o'clock the heat was unendurable, and we were forced to take shelter under a clump of five small palm trees. Here we remained till after six in the evening, when the march was resumed and continued till midnight. Though we had advanced twenty miles at least, no water was found; but there was an unlimited supply of gourds. We never walked half a mile without passing large patches of ground covered with them. No doubt vegetation is supported on these savannas by the night dews, which are very copious. Incredible numbers of buffalo were seen on all sides. Though we were frequently within a few hundred yards of some of the herds, they took no notice of us. One fine bull came so temptingly within range, that, though we were in no particular want of meat, I put a bullet through his shoulder. After receiving it, he stood perfectly still for a minute or more; then, bringing up a quantity of blood, he dropped upon his knees, rolled over and died. The remainder of the herd made off the instant they heard the crack of my rifle.

Sept. 22.

We did not pass a dozen trees during the whole day, neither did we meet with water; but this did

not put us to any great inconvenience, as the abundance of gourds enabled us to economize the store we had with us. The dry beds of several ponds or lakes lay in our road, but there was not a single drop of moisture in them. Our sufferings from the heat were frightful, and Toolo showed signs of sunstroke. For three or four hours we could not get him to move or speak; but he rallied in the evening, and, with assistance, went forward.

Sept. 28.

Still travelling over the same monotonous country. To our joy we discovered a considerable sized clump of palms about six in the morning. Though we marched at a quick pace we did not reach them until the heat had become insufferable, and our patient Toolo so ill that we were obliged to carry him. Our satisfaction was greatly augmented upon finding that the palms surrounded a small lake, at the bottom of which there was about sufficient stagnant water to float a duck. It was quite warm, and of detestable odour, being full of dead frogs and water-lizards, but we were parched enough to think it drinkable.

In the afternoon, Toolo, while in a state of raving excitement, made a desperate attack upon me with a knife. The united exertions of the five of us were

necessary to restrain him. The poor fellow laboured under the notion that I wished to shoot him, accused me of ill-treating him, and bringing him into a miserable desert to perish; and finally burst into tears and cooled down. I took care to have all the arms placed out of his reach, and a watch kept upon him; but as the heat subsided he gradually recovered, and at nightfall I was glad to perceive, as I thought, a marked change in him for the better.

We started at nine o'clock for a night march, the moon giving a good light for our guidance. In the morning, Mount Hercules was still visible, distant south-west about sixty miles. In front a winding line of tall trees marked the course of a river. The sight filled every heart with gladness, and Toolo laughed, sang, and wept in turns. The wildness of his eye and manner proved that his head was affected, and as the sun rose and gained power, he became worse. We hurried on to the river, and halted on its right bank shortly after seven o'clock, having been on the move ten hours, during which time we had not advanced as many miles; partly owing to our weakness from want of water, partly through delays caused by Toolo. It was the finest stream I had yet seen in the island, being about two hundred yards in width, with a rather rapid current. On both sides there was a broad band of trees and

vegetation. I called it the River Gladstone, after the premier of that name.

After satisfying our thirst, we indulged in a bath, until the sight of a large crocodile coming down with the stream frightened us out of the water. He evidently scented us; for he came right up to the spot where we had left the water, and proceeded to land. A bullet aimed at his head altered his intention, and sent him out into the middle of the river. In spite of five or six shots, all of which seemed to take effect, he succeeded in getting away.

Throughout the 24th and 25th we halted for rest and to make preparations for crossing the river. I decided to endeavour to construct a raft that should carry us and our baggage over; and for this purpose we cut down several young saplings, and laid them together transversely, securing them in their position with withes, and overlaying the whole with smaller branches. On this rude contrivance we embarked on the evening of the 25th, and trusting to the current and such propulsion as we could give it with roughly-constructed paddles, we boldly launched forth. After drifting down the stream for about three miles, we succeeded in effecting a landing on the opposite bank, where we settled ourselves under some teak trees for the night.

Sept. 26.

The course of the Gladstone was nearly due east, which led me to suppose that it emptied itself into some large lake in that direction, or perhaps ran on to the coast. In either case it was a river of such size and importance, that I determined to trace it to its mouth; and with this object in view, we proceeded to move along its left bank. As we advanced I found the country gradually become more fertile. The trees were of great height, some of them two hundred feet or more, and full of parrots and monkeys. The plain to the north, which we were leaving behind, had a park-like sprinkling of trees, and was bounded by some low, jungle-covered hillocks.

The number of crocodiles lying in the mud on the brink of the river made it dangerous to walk near it, and I kept the party half a mile inland from its course. Occasionally, however, the nature of the ground compelled us to march close to the water, and then extraordinary caution was needful. Seeing one big fellow, basking in the sun, and apparently asleep, I did not trouble to go very far out of his way. As we passed by, he got up and impudently ran after us, snapping his long jaws by way of defiance. Such conduct was not to be tolerated, and as he opened his mouth I sent a bullet down his

throat. It rolled him over at once, and in two minutes he was as dead as a stone. Having heard some travellers praise the crocodile's flesh, I brought away a few steaks to try it. It is passable, but certainly no dainty.

I was much troubled again to-day with Toolo. At first he got along very well, but towards the latter part of the day he became excited and quarrelsome. While we were making arrangements to pass the night, he seized upon Billy, who was standing near the brink of the river, and threw him into the water. As Billy was an expert swimmer no harm ensued; but the incident convinced me that our lives were not safe, and I told Toolo that if he was guilty of any further acts of violence, I should feel it my duty to put some restraint upon him; though I knew the poor fellow was not responsible for what he had done, and I merely used the threat in the hope of deterring him from a repetition of his conduct.

According to the rotation we observed, it was Toolo's turn to keep the first watch, and he was exceedingly angry when Danang went on guard in his place. He assaulted him with his fists, tried to disarm him, and behaved so outrageously, that I ordered him to be tied to a tree till he recovered himself and promised to be quiet. I was at a loss what remedies to resort to; but I shaved his head, kept wet

cloths constantly applied to it, and administered a little cooling medicine. In the morning he was so much better that I thought my treatment had been successful. He spoke and acted more like himself, and when we started, insisted upon carrying his share of the luggage, though I was anxious that he should not over-exert himself.

In about five miles the river made a great bend to the north-east, and in three more again turned to the east. At this point we halted for the day, in consideration of Toolo. In the evening, while rambling about the forest, I surprised a herd of twenty-nine deer; and having selected the finest buck, I was about to raise my rifle, when my attention was drawn to a swaying motion in the grass near the herd. The deer saw it also, and pricking up their ears, and stretching out their necks, they approached the spot with the curiosity of their species. When the leader had got to within eight or ten yards, a magnificent moolah sprang upon him, and with one blow from its paw felled him to the earth. While I was yet hesitating whether I should fire or not, a second moolah appeared, and the two together began to rend the dead deer. They were eighty or a hundred yards from me, which was too far for a good shot; and I began to move closer, always keeping my body behind a bush or other

obstacle. So intent were they upon their prey, that I got close to them without their noticing me. The largest beast had its side toward me, presenting a fine mark. I sent the ball through the shoulder, and the animal limped into a patch of long grass near at hand. The other ran a few paces, then stopped to look back. It was in an awkward position, but I fired, aiming between the eyes. I heard the ball strike, and saw the beast disappear amongst the trees; and whilst I was reloading I caught another glimpse of it, running wildly about.

Walking up to the grass where the first moolah had taken refuge, I endeavoured to frighten it out by throwing stones and shouting; but as this produced no movement, I suspected that the beast had escaped, and ventured to go a little nearer. Seeing nothing of it, I gained courage and entered the green patch. There lay the moolah on its side, and to all appearance dead. To make assurance doubly sure, I put a bullet behind the ear; but no *coup de grâce* was needed—the moolah was dead.

I spent two hours in looking for the other, but without success; though there were traces of blood on the ground for a great distance. The beast that fell into my hands was a far finer animal than the one killed in the Forest of Hercules, though it was a female. Its length was seven feet ten inches, from

the nose to the tail; which was two inches longer than the largest tiger I had ever seen in India.

Sept. 28.

Toolo appeared to be so rational that, at his own request, I allowed him to carry his rifle. The river was now nearly three hundred yards wide, and both banks were covered with a forest so dense that it excluded the sun's rays, which was a great benefit. After an almost straight course of eight miles, it emptied its waters into another and much larger river, which flowed with a rapid current to the north.

This splendid river was quite a quarter of a mile wide, and, like the lower portion of the Gladstone, ran through a virgin forest. At the point where the waters met there was a tremendous vortex. A mile and a half below the conflux, a large island increased the width to more than a mile, dividing the current into two very rapid streams. Three miles farther and the course altered slightly to the east, but speedily resumed its northerly direction. After we had camped, Aboo tried the waters with a hook and line, but he only brought two small trout-like fishes to land.

The 29th of September was marked by a melancholy and distressing occurrence. I had gone down to the river for the purpose of having a douse, when I was

startled by hearing the report of a rifle, followed by loud shouts and cries from my men. Thinking the camp had been attacked by a moolah or other wild beast, I hastily ran back, stripped as I was. The first object that met my sight was the body of poor Toolo, lying on the ground with his head shattered to pieces. He had taken his rifle in the presence of the others, and, before they could prevent him, had placed the muzzle in his mouth and discharged it by setting his toe on the trigger. Nearly the whole of the head was blown away, and death, of course, must have been instantaneous. When I had left him a few minutes before, he appeared cheerful, and in such good health that I made quite sure he had recovered from the effects of the sunstroke. But I am convinced that if he had been in his right mind he would not have committed the rash act which deprived him of his life.

This sad affair had such an effect upon me that I became quite ill, and almost lost heart. The poor fellow had been in my service nearly three years, and shared so many of my hardships and adventures, that I had grown to look upon and treat him more like a companion and friend than a servant. On his part he had always been most faithful in the discharge of his duties, and showed that remarkable attachment to my person which is so often found in

natives of the East towards those who have treated them with kindness. Previous to the unfortunate accident which affected his reason, I have no recollection that an angry word passed between us.

The disposal of the body was a difficulty that troubled me greatly. We had no tools with which to dig a grave, and my mind revolted from the thought of throwing the poor fellow into the river to become meat for the crocodiles. After great labour we succeeded in scraping out a shallow hollow, about a hundred and fifty yards from the spot where he fell. Here in the evening we buried him, wrapped in his blanket. On a tree at the head of the grave I cut the following inscription in large letters, and as deeply as I could: "Toolo. Died S. 29, 1872." We did not move away from the place until the next morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

Depression of the party—Banks of the Royal—Remarkable trick of an old monkey—Delayed by impenetrable undergrowth—Halt near a lovely spot—New birds—Forest-covered range of hills—Course of the Royal—Obstructed by a river—Island—Continued marching through forest—Jungle—Multitudes of crocodiles—New birds of paradise—Wild ox—Breadth of the river—Its characteristics—Tremendous heat—Beautiful scene by moonlight—Breakfast in the forest—Precipitous banks of the river—Halt at midnight—Lofty range of mountains—Waterfall—Noise of the torrent—Swallows—Features of the country—Danang seized by a moolah—Bird of the ostrich kind—Natives on the river—Communicate with them—They assume a threatening attitude—Proceed with them to their village—Papuan mythology—Desperate fight—Death of Danang and Joe—Our flight and escape—Land, and commence to move to the south—Our losses—Decide upon a retreat.

Sept. 30.

We departed from poor Toolo's grave before it was daylight. The whole party of us were very much depressed in spirit; and the gloomy grandeur of the forest through which we were marching, it will be easily understood, did not tend to enliven us. All with the exception of Aboo, begged me to turn back and return to Houtree; but I soon put a stop to that. Master Billy was rather rebellious about it;

but the production of a rope's end brought unpleasant reminiscences to his mind, and re-established discipline.

The river made several sharp turns to the east and north-east, and in the space of twelve or fourteen miles, varied in breadth from about three hundred to six hundred yards. There was no alteration in the character of the banks. One dense forest clothed them down to the water's edge, and hung out far over the stream. Birds whose plumage was variegated with the most brilliant colours, swarmed in the trees as thickly as bees in a hive. Parrots, cockatoos, finches, birds of paradise, crows, woodpeckers, doves, pigeons and scores of other species of which I knew nothing, all associated indiscriminately together, and appeared to be invariably on the best of terms one with another. Every here and there we passed under trees occupied by troops of monkeys, some of them of the large kind that had given us such trouble on a former occasion. They were a little better mannered at this place, though sometimes they saluted us with a volley of an offensive nature. One large tree in which they had established their quarters, stretched its branches twenty yards or more over the water. While I was watching the antics of the monkeys, a couple of crocodiles showed their heads just underneath and remained

stationary with their ugly snouts sticking up in the air.

In other countries, this is a common dodge of the crocodiles to entice the monkeys into their reach; and I expected now to see one or more of the noisy animals fall victims to the goggled-eyed monsters below, and with considerable curiosity I awaited the result. As soon as the black-looking heads popped up the monkeys became silent. Presently one big fellow—evidently a man of authority in this monkey republic—came down to reconnoitre. He returned, and in a few minutes came down again with a long, thin stick in his hand, and accompanied by about a hundred of his companions. They began to chatter, and pelt their foes; but the crocodiles took no notice, and I thought, seemed to give a wink of satisfaction at seeing their silly victims coming within their reach. Nearer and nearer they came, until some of them were barely six feet above the crocodiles; and I was expecting every instant to see one of them dragged under the water. All of a sudden, the monkey with the stick leaned over and drove it into the eye of the crocodile nearest him. The wounded reptile sank like lead, and was quickly followed by its comrade. There was no mistaking the howl of delight that greeted this stratagem and its success. It was perfectly human in its tone, and

was taken up with vengeful glee by all the monkeys in the neighbourhood. The gravity of demeanour, with which the old fellow committed this assault and battery, was laughable in the extreme. He went to work with all the caution and seriousness of an old lawyer, and when he had inflicted the poke, he hauled himself aloft with an alacrity that showed he could form a very good estimation of the danger which he ran.

Our progress was much impeded by the closeness of the undergrowth. The creepers and climbing plants ran from tree to tree, and interlaced with each other, like a thick curtain. To break through was impossible, and we had to search for a natural gap, which caused a great waste of time, not to mention the fatigue and annoyance. In ten hours' marching we did not advance fifteen miles.

Our halting place for the night, was at the point where a large brook emptied its waters into the river. It was a lovely spot. Tall, magnificent trees formed a lofty arch over our heads, from which depended festoons of climbers, bearing flowers of marvellous beauty and every imaginable colour. Never, before or since, have I seen so many different species in one confined spot. Amongst those whose flowers were convolvulus shaped, some were yellow spotted with red, others white spotted with red, pale

violet, ultramarine striped with white, black spotted and striped with yellow, pure scarlet, scarlet marked with white, and yellow, puce striped with white and some were a very pale sulphur colour. In size they were about as large as a pint jug.

During the twilight I had some excellent sport along the river's brink. Ducks and other water fowl were as thick as grasshoppers, and I frequently killed six or seven at a shot. Thirty-nine ducks, five ibises, two storks, seven kingfishers, and three new birds, were the spoils of an hour's shooting. The new birds were something the shape of an ibis, but the bill was long, straight and slender. The wings were a very pretty green, with a white mark upon them. The back and tail were nearly black, speckled with white; and the neck had a white ring round it. The top of the head was crimson, the throat white, the breast rose colour, and the feet and bill slate colour. One of the kingfishers was also of a new species. It was the size of a thrush, of a beautiful light blue colour with an orange crest. The wing coverts were orange, and the tail was edged with the same colour.

October 1.

Resumed our march along the left bank of the river. The country unchanged, but much intersected

by water courses. We crossed seven during the day.

Oct. 2.

Seven o'clock, came abreast of a range of hills, about four hundred feet in height. Their outline was very ragged and romantic, and they were covered with forest. Three miles lower down, a corresponding range was seen on the right bank. For nine or ten miles the river made no bend whatever, and then turned off suddenly to the west. After puzzling myself to find an appropriate name to bestow upon it, I called it the River Royal. I do not think any travellers who may follow my footsteps, will quarrel with the name when they have seen this truly noble river; but if they do, they are at liberty to alter it for one more suitable to their tastes. Heat, 109° in the shade. Shot two fine deer about dusk.

Oct. 3.

After a winding course of seven miles, the Royal again turned to the north, and we had another long reach of five miles. The width was now uniformly five hundred yards or so.

Oct. 4.

Crossed eight water-courses, and were then stopped by a river of large size. To have attempted its

passage by means of a raft, would have been madness. We should most certainly have been swept out by the strong current into the middle of the Royal, and there come to grief. We were compelled to push up the bank of this obstructing river, until we came to a place where it was fordable, and then wend our way back to the banks of the Royal. In this way the 5th, and great part of the 6th, was lost. On the 7th, we passed a large island and three small ones, lying in midstream, and covered, as was every square yard of land on both banks, with an enchantingly lovely forest growth.

From the 7th to the 17th of October, little worth recording occurred. During the whole of that period, we never once met with the least break in the dense forest through which we were forcing our way. Though we marched early and late, there were so many obstacles to be overcome, that we did not cover, on an average, more than ten or twelve miles a day. Only one low range of hills was seen; and the course of the river, though very serpentine, never diverged much from the north. The number of streams crossed (all, of course, tributaries of the Royal) was so great that I kept no account of them. Four rivers of considerable size, caused us great trouble and delay; but we ultimately effected a passage over them without accident. The great exertion, necessi-

tated by travelling through such a close and confined country, proved terribly exhausting to our bodies: insomuch that we were forced to lie by from the 18th to the 22nd. Had we suffered at all from scarcity of water or game, none of the party would have been able to stand the continued hard labour. As it was, the want of bread and grain food was much felt.

On the 22nd, the country took a more open character; but it was covered with a jungle growth of eight or ten feet in height. The quantity of game seen was immense. Throughout the day we were continually passing herds of deer, and no fewer than fifteen moolahs were seen at different times: but as they showed no hostile intentions we allowed them to go in peace. Crocodiles were the greatest nuisance. They literally swarmed along the bank, and we were obliged to keep a sharp look out, not only before, but also behind: for they frequently followed us, and we had to shoot several in self defence, which troubled me principally on account of the waste of ammunition which it caused. In the course of one hour we passed the astounding number of three hundred and fourteen of these reptiles. How they all contrive to exist is a mystery; though, no doubt, they capture a great many deer when they come down to the water to drink.

On this part of the river, birds of paradise were

not numerous; but I shot individuals of two different species, which I believe to be new. The first was of a velvety black colour, with a sky-blue breast and topknot. The other was very small—not larger than a sparrow; but the two long feathers in its tail were fourteen inches in length. The rest of the tail was only two and a half inches long. The colour of the body was a very deep crimson; the wing covers and tail black; the two long feathers of the tail a kind of rust colour; the plume on the head green tipped with deep blue, and the throat and breast a salmon or rose colour. Though a handsome little bird, the blending of colours was by no means pleasing.

Oct. 23.

This morning I shot an animal of the ox genus. It was far less in size than the buffalo, but in shape remarkably like the American bison. Its hair was very long and shaggy, and black in colour. The horns were nine inches in length, twisted and black. The herd of which it was a member, numbered eighteen or twenty individuals, including four half-grown calves. They were very slow in their movements and awkward in their gait; and we could easily have shot down eight or ten of the herd before they were out of range: for instead of making off at once on the report of the rifle, they ran round their fallen com-

rade, sniffing the air and bellowing aloud. My Papuan guide had never seen or heard of this animal before, a proof that it is peculiar to the northern side of New Guinea. Heat in the shade at noon 111°, but a fine breeze from the north-east mollified it greatly.

Oct. 24.

The river was now fully half a mile broad, and the current very rapid. It was indeed a Royal river, and I became more than even pleased with the name I had given it. The right bank was still pretty thickly clothed with forest, but on the left we had patches of open savanna, jungle and forest in turns. The nature of the country enabled us to travel with greater expedition than had been usual lately. We contrived to get over about twenty miles, crossing thirteen rivulets and streams in that distance. Just before halting for the night, a dull, sullen roar broke upon our ears, which I recognised in an instant as the rushing of a cataract. There could be no doubt about it: and yet I was very much surprised; for the Royal did not run through a mountainous, or even a hilly, tract of country. The rapidity of the current removed any latent doubt that lurked in my mind, and I became convinced of the correctness of my surmise.

Oct. 25.

A sudden bend of the river to the east brought us in sight of a chain of rugged hills, running north by west on both sides. The course of the river was now between cliffy banks seven feet high. The forest on the right bank ceased abruptly at the foot of the hills: on the left we had a dense jungle.

The heat compelled us to halt at half-past eight. It was then up to a hundred and seven; at noon it stood at 114° in the shade; and we could make no further progress till after six in the evening. The roar of the cataract was very audible, and as we advanced became constantly more so. That the fall must be very large was evident from the size of the river and the volume of the sound; and my excitement and anxiety to push on were so great, that nothing but consideration for my companions kept me from marching all night. It was after midnight when we camped down, and Aboo who took first watch, fell asleep in a standing posture before he had been at his post a quarter of an hour.

As I felt no desire for sleep I took his place. I was too tired, however, to pace backwards and forwards in true sentry style; and seating myself on a fallen tree that happened to be lying conveniently at hand, I watched the rippling of the river and gave my mind over to reflection, wondering what was to

happen in the future, and how many more important discoveries I was to make in this remarkable, and, to Europeans, unknown island.

The moon was nearly full; and the beautiful mellow light it shed over the trees and river, gave the place the appearance of fairy-land. I could easily have imagined myself under the influence of some enchanting spell. The murmuring of the waters was the only sound that broke the stillness of the atmosphere, except when a fish leaped up, or a crocodile slipped his huge body into the river with a splash. Not a breath of air was astir, and the night was unusually close and oppressive. Once or twice only there was a hollow murmur amongst the tree-tops as a slight breeze rustled through them.

A little before daylight I dropped into a sound sleep, and when I awoke the sun was high in the heavens. My men were still wrapped in slumber, and as it was too late to move that morning, I permitted them to enjoy their sleep, while I lit a fire and got breakfast ready, consisting of some strips of dried beef and venison and a cup of tea. I was troubled to find that I was getting very short of the latter article, and the sugar was gone entirely.

At five precisely we set out, and I gave the men to understand that I should expect a good night's work from them. At starting we had five or six

miles of marsh land, thickly covered with reeds and jungle intermixed. It was full of snakes and lizards, and several very large iguannas were also seen. Upon emerging from the marsh, the river, which had been running to the north-east, made a great sweep round to the north again, forcing its way through a narrow rocky channel with precipitous banks, in some places forty feet high. In this part, and for the next nine miles, it was only about a hundred and fifty yards wide. Afterwards it suddenly increased in width to six or seven hundred yards, and then again gradually contracted to two hundred and fifty or three hundred.

By midnight I calculated we had marched twenty miles, but the windings of the river had been so many, that the actual distance covered as a crow would fly was probably not more than ten miles. From the shaking of the earth and the tremendous roar of the torrent, I judged that we must be very close to it; but I determined to wait for daylight before we went further. We lay for the night under the hollowed outside of a cliff, close to the river. This we could do with safety: for the crocodiles had entirely disappeared, owing no doubt to the proximity of the falls.

We started very early the next morning, and saved a considerable turn in the river by striking across a fine open plain, where we met with another herd of

the black wild ox and many deer. Twelve miles to the west the plain was bounded by a lofty mountain chain, running apparently from north-east to south-west. I should suppose some of the peaks to be at least five thousand feet in height. Nearer the river was a range of singular looking hills, capped with trees of such regular height, that they appeared to have been cut off and dressed.

Upon regaining the river we could see the spray hovering like a cloud, above the cataract; but it was nearly nine o'clock before we reached the falls themselves. For an hour previous to that time the roar of the falling water had been perfectly deafening: the sight itself was appalling. A mass of water, three hundred yards in width, rolled over the precipice into a fearful gulf below, raising a misty cloud of spray many hundred feet in height. Not a single rock or islet broke the enormous body of water; but it fell in one magnificent sheet, the great depth of a hundred and seventy-nine feet. The rocky and precipitous banks on either side were sprinkled with trees down to the water's edge; and a few large trees were actually growing in the water a short distance below the falls. Many trunks and snags and rocks lay in the bed of the stream; and I saw many decayed and uprooted trees floating down with the current.

Some idea of the terrific noise may be formed by the following incident:—There were a great number of swallows or martins skimming over the surface of the water, and occasionally darting down close to the cataract. I desired Aboo, who was an excellent shot at a flying mark, to shoot one of them that I might examine it. He was about fifty paces distant when he fired, but I could not hear the report of the gun. The roar of the torrent effectually drowned it.

The bird was about twice the size of our English swallows. The whole of the back, wings and tail, were a beautiful deep green colour, with a bluish gloss when the sun shone upon it. The breast and under parts were a pale rose colour. The male bird was distinguished by having a white mark on the wing. Besides these swallows, several kingfishers, and abundance of large water fowl, were seen near the falls. Amongst those not noticed before were some wild geese. I shot a couple of them, but they were so fishy as not to be worth the powder and shot.

On the left bank of the river was a large mass of rock, projecting over the falls, and looking like the ruined buttress of a bridge that had been swept away. It was quite enveloped in the spray, but I scrambled out upon it, having first undressed to avoid

wetting my clothes. Stretching out upon my chest I peeped over, but soon drew back with a shudder. From my boyhood I have had an inveterate horror of precipices; yet I generally feel a kind of fascinating desire to approach the brink whenever I see one. Beneath me the water boiled and seethed with fearful violence, and it seemed as if the frail-looking rock upon which I was perched, must inevitably give way, and precipitate me into the vortex beneath.

As the sun began to wane we departed from the falls, and proceeded to the north, following the course of the river. The banks and neighbouring country were of a very rocky character, and intersected with deep gullies, at the bottom of most of which a rapid, but shallow, stream ran. Wild nutmegs, cloves and pepper, together with several fruits already described in a former chapter, grew here in every sheltered nook, in great profusion. In some parts the ground looked like a flower garden, so thickly were the blossoms clustered together. The flowers were principally white and blue, and similar in shape to a poppy. A species of bamboo with beautiful feather-like foliage, bore a scarlet flower of sweet smell; and ferns of innumerable varieties covered the face of every rock and crag. Altogether, I thought this the most romantic and pretty part of the island I had yet passed through.

But death lurked in almost every lovely clump of flowers; for the place was alive with snakes, a large proportion of which were venomous; and several moolahs crossed our path. One of the latter stopped to look at us, and seemed half inclined to dispute our passage. As, however, he altered his mind, and went quickly on his way, I thought it as well to refrain from becoming the aggressor and offered no impediment to his retreat. Had I known what was about to happen, I should probably have been less peacefully disposed.

Oct. 28.

We were startled from our sleep about daybreak by loud cries from Billy who was on guard. Springing to my feet I was just in time to see a large moolah disappear into the jungle with Danang in its mouth. Surprise and the suddenness of the alarm, deprived us for a moment of the power of action; but speedily recovering my presence of mind, I seized my rifle, and calling to the others to follow, rushed off in the direction in which the brute appeared to be going. In a few minutes I came up with Danang, alive and on his feet, and when the others joined us we conducted him back to the camp. His arm was badly bitten a little below the shoulder, and the left side of the neck and shoulder was torn by the creature's

claws; but he made light of his injuries and did not appear to be dangerously hurt. His version of the matter was, that as he lay asleep he suddenly felt a sharp pain in the arm, and found himself being dragged along with unpleasant roughness. Scarcely knowing what he did, and wholly unconscious of his dangerous position, he began to violently punch at the creature with his right fist, which was free, and it then released him and left him lying in the jungle. Quite bewildered, and not even then knowing by whom or what he had been attacked, he got upon his feet and stood there till I found him.

I do not believe that the moolah could have approached the camp without being seen, and therefore conclude that Billy (that unfortunate transgressor) was asleep, though he stoutly denied it. If he was awake he was guilty of most culpable negligence, and I severely reprimanded him. The accident was a source of much inconvenience; for it rendered Danang incapable of bearing a burden; and as we had lost poor Toolo also, and were thus two hands short, we had rather more than a convenient weight to divide amongst the rest of us. As some punishment for his remissness, I made Billy carry a double load.

I have myself been in the jaws of a tiger, and witnessed many remarkable escapes of others; but

this of Danang's was certainly the most marvellous that ever came under my notice. Probably the animal was driven to attack him in the first place by excessive hunger, and then, astounded by the strange resistance it met with, dropped him in fright. There is one thing that would seen to contradict this theory, and that is, that there was abundance of game in the neighbourhood, and it is difficult to conceive that the animal should be short of prey.

About eight o'clock as we were crossing a small plain, a large bird was seen, which at first I mistook for a bustard. As it was far out of shot range, I fired at it with ball and brought it down. It was dark brown on the back, with black wings and tail. The breast and belly were white, spotted with reddish brown, and the quill feathers of the wing were also white. In shape it was very much like the ostrich, but its neck was not so long, nor was it so ungainly in appearance. Its size was about that of a swan, and it made us a delicious supper, tasting something like a plump and well-fed turkey.

Oct. 29.

We had scarcely been marching two hours when the river made a sudden bend, almost due east, bringing us in sight of a long reach, in which three canoes were lying, the occupants being apparently

engaged in fishing. It was so long since our eyes had rested on any of our own species, that the sight filled us with joy; and we hurried forward, shouting to attract the notice of the men in the canoes. They heard us, and the smallest of the three came to the spot where we were standing. When, however, they were near enough to make a close inspection of us, they stopped in amazement, and signalled to their companions, who quickly joined them. Meanwhile the three men in the first canoe paid no attention to our request that they would come ashore; but they were very inquisitive, demanding who we were, where we had come from, and what we wanted in that part of the island. Aboo tried to give them satisfactory answers, but they kept putting the same questions over again, as if to gain time until they were joined by their companions.

When the others came up they all landed, eleven in number, armed with daggers, a kind of short, curved sword, pikes, and a couple of flint muskets. One man had also a pair of enormous horse pistols, that looked to be at least a hundred years old. He seemed to be the chief, for he began to question Aboo, the others pressing rudely around us. I had at this time acquired a sufficient knowledge of the Papuan language to understand a great deal of what he said; and explaining that I was the head of the

party, I desired him to bid his men fall back, and asked if he could direct or conduct me to a village where I could obtain a few necessaries, taking care to mention that I was willing to pay him well for any trouble I might put him to. While I was speaking one of the men made an attempt to snatch away my rifle, and another fell upon Aboo, but he was on his guard and beat the fellow to the earth in an instant. At the same time I stepped back a pace or two, and pointing my rifle point-blank at the chief's head, I declared positively that I would shoot him dead if the whole party did not fall back and cease their hostile threatenings. They seemed cowed at my resolute bearing, and retired immediately, with the exception of the man who had been struck, and who lay insensible at our feet.

When they were at a safe distance, I told the chief that I wished for peace, but if they were averse to it we were well armed and not afraid to fight. I told him, that if he chose to be friendly we would reward him; if not, we only asked to be allowed to pass on unmolested. He replied, that what his follower had done was against his wish, that he was sorry for it, and would gladly make friends with me. In token of it he came forward without his arms. I did the same (having, however, my pistol concealed in my breast), and we

embraced. He then offered me fish, of which they had a large quantity in the canoes. I accepted it, and gave him money in exchange, of which he seemed to know the use, but not to set any great value upon.

All this time the man who had attacked Aboo was lying senseless on the ground, and bleeding from the nose and mouth. I expressed a hope that he was not seriously hurt, and was about to examine him; but the chief stopped me, and beckoning to his men, two of them came up and brought the fellow back to life by ducking him in the river.

After this the chief proposed that we should enter the canoes and go with him to his village. I consented, but Aboo whispering me to be cautious, I declined to enter the chief's canoe without one of my attendants. He complained that I was distrusting him, but offered no objection to Aboo's seating himself near me. Danang, Joe, and Billy entered the second large canoe, with their arms and part of the baggage, the remainder of the baggage being in the small canoe, with four of the Papuans.

The chief sat close beside me, and kept up a lively conversation. For an inhabitant of New Guinea, he was not a bad-looking man; and he was intelligent and acute in his conclusions and obser-

vations. I was soon off my guard, and felt there was nothing to fear from this man. He appeared so open and ingenuous, that I never once thought it possible treachery could be lurking behind his friendly deportment, though I saw Aboo was ill at ease.

Throughout the day we got on very well. The weather was rather hot; but our newly found friends, as I thought them, did not seem to be troubled with the heat, and we made no stoppage at midday. The river continued to run east and north-east, for twenty miles or more, and then turned off gradually to the north again. There was scarcely any variation in the character of the country through which we passed. The banks of the river were steep and rocky, and from thirty to forty feet in height. Here and there we passed a hill or low range; but it was seldom I could get a glance across the country. Occasionally, however, where streams and small rivers emptied themselves into the Royal, there was a break in the cliffy banks, and I could scan the landscape for three or four miles inland. It appeared to be hilly, and in some places overgrown with forest and jungle; in others rocky and broken in a remarkable manner.

I sought, of course, to gain some information from the chief in whose canoe I was sitting, and from

him I gleaned the following items. The sea, he said, could easily be reached by water in a day and a half, or two days at furthest. He had never seen an European before, nor a blackman, but had heard of both. Malay and Chinese vessels frequented the northern coasts to trade, and sometimes to commit acts of piracy. They often quarrelled, and with an expressive grimace, he gave me to understand that they cut each other's throats.

I was anxious to learn the chief's name, but he would not give me the desired information; and, fearful of giving him offence, I did not press the question. The river Royal he called "Chingoo mallan," which means the "river of the god Chin"; who, according to Papuan mythology, created all the seas, rivers, and lakes in the world, with the fish that dwell in them, while his three brothers, Am, Looshang, and Dillah, made the earth, plants, and animals; and their sister, Moushat, gave being to all winged creatures, as birds, bats, and insects.

About four o'clock in the afternoon the banks of the river became less elevated, and in the course of another hour they were only a few feet above the water; and very shortly afterwards we paddled by several rice-fields. In the distance I could see a hut or two, peeping up from amidst the foliage, but none of the inhabitants showed themselves. The

scenery on both sides of the river was very beautiful, and the aromatic odour from the spice trees most delightful. Magnificent trees, of hundreds of different species, reared their lordly heads to an enormous height; and some of the wallah trees actually seemed to reach the clouds. As we advanced, keeping in near the right side, large tracts of cultivated ground showed that the neighbourhood must be thickly peopled; but as yet we only saw a few scattered huts, and five or six persons in one of the fields, who did not appear to see our canoes.

Between six and seven in the evening we arrived at the village. It was a large place, and the huts were built close together, many of them within a yard or two of the river. As we landed, Aboo said to me in Dutch, that if I entered the village I should never come out alive, for he was sure they meant mischief. I hardly knew what excuse to make to the chief; but there was so much earnestness in the manner of Aboo, that I was convinced his fears were not groundless. Under these circumstances I told the chief that it was imperatively necessary that I should proceed without delay, and I requested him to sell me food and a canoe. He refused flatly, and said I must go with him into the village, and be introduced to the "Yanjang," or head chief of the place. I began to expostulate with

him, but he became very insolent and overbearing, and ordered his men to take my things out of the canoes, thus confirming the suspicions of Aboo.

While we were arguing together, a crowd of eighty or a hundred men collected around us. Most of them were armed, and they had at least a dozen muskets amongst them; but so far they looked on quietly, without showing any hostile intentions. When the chief began to remove my goods from the canoes I called out loudly for the Yanjang to be brought to me; but no one took any notice, and the chief, seizing me by the arm, tried to force me towards the village. I pushed him back, with as little violence as possible, upon which he drew a pistol and snapped it at my head. Fortunately it was an old flint-lock, and missed fire; and, before he had time to draw the second weapon from his girdle, Danang had felled him to the earth with the butt of his rifle. A frightful mêlée ensued. The whole crowd rushed down upon us, and three or four shots were fired; but as they were quite as likely to shoot their friends as us, those who were in rear of the crowd had the sense to reserve their fire.

I tried to get my baggage back into one of the canoes, and with the assistance of Joe was lifting one of the bundles over the gunwale, when a short, thick-set fellow stabbed the poor Australian in the

side of the neck, killing him, apparently, at once. Seizing our axe, I brought the back part of it down upon the miscreant's head, with such force, that I scattered his skull and brains in every direction. I was surrounded in an instant, but my blood was up, and drawing my revolver, I shot three fellows down in almost as many seconds, and sent those near me flying like a flock of sheep. At the same time Danang had got hold of my double-barrelled rifle and discharged its contents amid the crowd, killing or wounding three more, one bullet appearing to pass through two men. Aboo also fired, but I did not ascertain with what result.

During the momentary panic caused by our desperate defence, we succeeded in getting into the canoe and pulling off from the shore. We were speedily followed, and many shots were fired after us; one of which went through Danang's head. In his fall he nearly upset the canoe, and the weight of the body proved a great drawback to our flight. As we were being rapidly overtaken, and the poor fellow was undoubtedly quite dead, we threw his body overboard and paddled for dear life.

By this time it was nearly dark, but the moon was rising, and our chance of escape appeared to be a fearfully poor one. In fact, I had made up my mind to die, and while exerting the whole strength

of my arms at the paddles, I was praying for pardon and salvation. Desperate as our position appeared, I never for a moment lost courage; neither did Aboo. We both determined to sell our lives as dearly as possible, and used every exertion to elude the foe. As for Billy, his whole anxiety was to lie in the bottom of the canoe; and he was only kept at the paddles by the fear that I would shoot him if he forsook them.

In ten minutes, a canoe full of our pursuers was close upon us, and began to fire, the bullets whistling past our heads, and striking the water within a few inches of our craft. We stopped and lay down in the bottom, much to Billy's satisfaction, and waited for the enemy's approach. The instant they came alongside, we started up, shot two or three of them, upset their canoe, beat out the brains of a fellow who caught hold of our paddles, and immediately resumed our flight.

To my indescribable relief, the next half hour passed by and we saw or heard nothing to lead us to the conclusion that our foes were near at hand. We had either distanced them, or they were under the impression that we had landed, and stopped to look for us. I believe Providence put the latter notion into their heads: or their canoes, well manned as they were, must have overtaken us.

Keeping near the middle of the river, we paddled down with the current, which was here as rapid as it was above the falls. Several times during the night we heard the barking of dogs and crowing of cocks, and once we saw a light on the right bank, but it vanished in less than a minute. From these signs I judged the banks to be pretty thickly inhabited, and I was in terror lest we should attract the attention of some of the people, though, perhaps, it was needless fear, for the river was very broad in this part; and as if it was so ordered to screen us, the night became overcast and cloudy, obscuring the light of the moon. However, as it was very evident that daylight would discover us, and the news of the fight that had taken place was sure to spread over the country, we determined to land, and seek the shelter of the forest as quickly as possible.

Cautiously approaching the left bank, we cruised along until we found a favourable spot for landing, then, sinking the canoe lest it should serve to guide our enemies in their search for us, we advanced across the country at right angles with the river. There was just sufficient light to enable us to see where we were going, but not to reveal the country ahead, and a little before daybreak we came to a rice plantation, and found we were in the neighbourhood of a village. We lost no time in getting away from

it, especially as several dogs set up a furious barking, and altered our course to the south-west.

Daylight broke much to our discomfort this morning: for it enabled us to see that we were in the midst of an open country, and two villages were in sight, one immediately in rear of us, which was that we had passed, the other about four miles to our right. The villagers were astir in the latter, as I could see through my glass, which was the only instrument I had left. All my goods and chattels, with the exception of one small bundle, had fallen into the hands of the enemy; and I had nothing left save a few skins which I wished to preserve, a small stock of ammunition intended as a reserve, my journal and a couple of other books. My clothing, provisions, instruments, the bulk of the ammunition, four rifles (one of them double-barrelled) and my fowling-piece, had been taken from us in the scuffle, to say nothing of the loss of two faithful servants.

All these losses together, had reduced me to a miserable plight, and I felt there was nothing left to me but to retreat at once. I knew we had made this part of the country too hot to hold us, for the people with whom we had fought would be sure to search far and near for us, in the hope of having revenge for the loss of their comrades; besides which the inhabitants appeared to be of a treacherous and

evil disposition, and we were not at all likely to secure their friendship, especially as my party was not strong enough to hold them in awe. I had but a scanty supply of ammunition, no extra clothing and no articles to purchase necessaries from the natives, or with which to buy their good-will. We had only two rifles and a pistol, and had we more arms, Billy was not fit to be entrusted with them: in fact he was useless in any case of emergency.

My mind was quickly made up. According to my calculation we could not be more than twenty or thirty miles from the north-east coast; but to advance towards it under the present circumstances, was almost sure to lead to our destruction; and as it was, there was a grave doubt on my mind whether we should escape with life. One thing was certain. Our only chance was to gain the uninhabited interior of the island at once.

CHAPTER IX.

Park-like country—Alter our route—Contrivances for frightening birds—Forced march—Meet a party of natives—Thoroughly tired by our exertions—Sup near a wallah grove—Pass near a village—Conversation with a queer old native—Wild and broken tract of country—Gigantic grass—Deep watercourse—Footsore—Our wounds attacked by ants—Nest of the wild bee—Fine trees—Another party of natives—Grassy plains resembling a corn-field—Ford a river—Rocky country abounding in game—Curious birds' nests—Description of the bird—Fox—Immense hollow tree—An unpleasant visitor—Romantic appearance of the forest—Apparent fertility of the soil—Independent character of the Papuans—Compelled to halt—Yagi spiders—Good sport on the 8th—Ostriches—Resume our journey—Heavy rains—The country laid under water—Agreeable change in the weather—Thick mist—Vast forest of teak trees—Pigeons—Discovery of human skeletons—Remarkable destructive powers of ants—Traces of a large party.

THE face of the country, as far as I could see in every direction, was nearly perfectly level, and scattered over with groves and clumps of trees like a park. A thick, forest-like line of vegetation to the east I judged to mark the course of the river Royal. If it was so, we were only about five or six miles westward of it, a fact that did not please me very well. My mind was further disturbed by the number

of fields under cultivation, and the huts scattered about under some of the wallah trees. We passed within a mile of one of these huts without seeing any one, and I suppose without being seen.

When we had got out of sight of the villages, we made a direct turn to the west, and marched in that direction for two hours, when we again chose a south-by-west route, and soon afterwards passed a maize field. As there was no one about, we helped ourselves to a bushel or two of the grain, a luxury we had not had the opportunity of enjoying for the last few weeks. In this field there were forty or fifty of the contrivances for frightening birds mentioned in the fore part of this book. There being a fresh breeze blowing from the north-west, they were making a great noise, and effectually answering their purpose.

Our trepidation was too great to admit of a halt at the usual time; and myself and Aboo perfectly agreed with Billy, that it was "better die heat dan knife," by which expression he meant to convey his opinion, that it was better to die through the heat than by the knife of our foe. The heat was great, but fortunately not excessive; and we marched at a very quick pace. Every mile that we covered lessened our danger, and proportionately eased our minds. On we went, never halting longer than ten

minutes or a quarter of an hour at a time. Between four and five in the afternoon, upon emerging from a wood of some extent, we were much startled to find ourselves close to a party of natives consisting of eleven men and three boys. Though they were not more than three hundred yards from us they failed to discover us, and we immediately drew back behind some bushes, and waited until they had passed by. They came within twenty yards of our hiding-place, and we crouched down to the ground to escape observation. As it happened they did not even look in our direction, but went on quickly, talking to each other in an excited and loud tone; and, from the few disjointed words which we heard, apparently quarrelling about the loss of some article. The whole party was unarmed, and they were carrying large bundles of sticks, looking like fascines. They went in a westerly direction, and after watching them out of sight, we resumed our way, keeping a sharp look-out for fear of meeting with other parties.

Had we presented ourselves to these men, we should probably have been received in a friendly manner, seeing they were without means of attacking us; but my great object was to pass through the country without being seen by the natives; so that if any of the people whom we had fought with should attempt to trace out our course, they should

not be able to glean information from their fellow-countrymen, who would moreover doubtless join in the pursuit when they heard of the slaughter we had made.

About seven o'clock we halted, thoroughly exhausted, and risking all dangers, lay down for the night, without either lighting a fire or setting a watch, for we were too tired to mount guard, and a light would certainly have betrayed us if any of the natives were within a mile or two. I believe we had walked at the very least fifty miles since leaving the river in the morning, for we had kept up a good pace throughout the day, and, as I have already said, never halted for more than a few minutes at a time. No wonder then that we slept till nearly noon of the following day, and awoke with back and limbs so stiff and sore, that we found it difficult to stand upright. We suffered too from the pangs of hunger, for the only food we had tasted during the past forty hours was a little unripe maize. We had seen plenty of game of all kinds, but I had been afraid to fire lest the report should attract attention. Now, however, I thought I might be a little less scrupulous, especially as upon searching the country through my glass I could discover no signs of human life, and we ventured to light a fire, and soon had a couple of plump monkeys down to roast. Strength-

ened by this meal, we moved forward between two and three o'clock, just in the hottest part of the afternoon; but I was afraid to make a longer delay.

We did not get along very well; for besides being excessively tired, the skin was off our feet and the flesh raw. By seven o'clock we had marched, perhaps, twelve miles, and reached the banks of a large brook, which was, without doubt, a tributary of the Royal. We crossed it and encamped on the right bank, in the midst of a fine grove of wallah trees. While I and Billy made arrangements for the night's rest, Aboo tried the brook with his hook and line, and brought to land sufficient fish, principally eels, to make us an excellent supper with wallah nuts and the remains of the maize. The latter we dressed in the American fashion; viz., by placing the ears in the embers of the fire and so roasting them. If they are in the green state, they are very nice and nutritious cooked in this way.

November 1.

Soon after starting we came to a small village containing about a dozen huts, surrounded by fields of grain. We did not show ourselves more than we could help; and finding a native pathway, or rather track, winding through the forest, we struck into it until it trended too much to the east. Hardly had

we left it when we came face to face with an old Papuan, carrying a dead deer on his shoulder. Our meeting was very sudden. We had been making our way along a hollow valley, and upon ascending the ridge on its south-west side, the old fellow appeared from amongst the trees not a hundred yards from us. He advanced to within forty or fifty paces before he appeared to notice that we were strangers. When he made that apparently unpleasant discovery, he dropped the deer, unslung an old musket, and prepared to make an active defence of himself and property. Aboo sang out to him that we were peacefully disposed, and begged he would come and parley with us; but he kept his musket pointed towards us, and replied that if we attempted to approach him he would fire. I assured him we intended to do him no harm; but if he was unwilling to communicate with us, we would go quietly on our way, and requested him to do the same. He seemed to be a little mollified at this, lowered his gun, and sat down upon the carcase of the deer, beckoning us to come near. I went up to him, and after our English custom, asked him how he was, speaking of course in the Papuan language. He laughed heartily, as if he thought my inquiry a good joke, as doubtless he did; for the Papuan method of addressing a stranger is by exclaiming, "nas didda nang,"—"I hope you

prosper;" but I did not think of it for the moment. However, I corrected my mistake, at which he was more tickled than ever. I was pleased to find him so good-humoured, though I noticed that he did not return my salute. He was not so curious to know who and what I was, as had been most of the natives I had met with before; but he very quickly asked if I had anything to give him. I gave him a dollar, and inquired if he would sell me the deer or part of it. He said I might have the deer for twelve charges of powder, or half of it for six charges. I told him we had no powder to spare, and offered him money instead; but he would not take it. I asked where he came from. Without a word he raised his arm and pointed northward; and when I demanded how far away, he pointed again and inquired if I would go with him. I should very much have liked to do so, but the risk was too great, and I declined; upon which the old man slung his gun, shouldered his deer, and marched off, without taking any further notice of us or our polite farewells. As it was possible he might have companions in the vicinity, we also lost no time in leaving the neighbourhood.

The country through which we had passed hitherto had been tolerably level, and well but not densely wooded. It was now assuming a rocky character, with large patches of jungle and forest. Rough,

craggy valleys and deep gullies cut the ground in all directions, though most of them ran east and west. The trees were gigantic, and the grass in the jungle in some places nearly twenty feet in height, and near the ground as thick round as my wrist. It was impossible to force a way through it, and when these patches lay in our way, we were under the necessity of working round them, which was a tedious and time-losing operation. We crossed several water-courses, all of them having high and steep banks. One stream that wended its way at the bottom of a gully, was so far below the top of its banks, that it made one giddy to look down. It was dangerous passing them also, for an accidental slip would in all probability have been fatal. None of these contained more than two or three feet of water, and some were nearly dried up, there being only a few pools in their beds. The current of others was very rapid and strong, and the water beautifully clear and cool, running over a hard pebbly bottom with large masses of rock lying here and there, as if it had fallen from the banks above, which appeared to be composed of a kind of quartz, arranged in strata of different shades, red, black and grey.

Notwithstanding our anxiety lest the old gentleman we recently parted from should bring some of his countrymen after us, we halted for a few hours

during the heat of the day: for our feet, and mine in particular, were in a most distressing condition. My stockings were saturated with blood, and every footstep was marked with the sanguine fluid which oozed through the holes in my dilapidated boots. The ants, too, and other insects attacked the wounded parts, and sometimes drove me half mad with agony. The only way to get rid of these pests was to soak and wash my feet in water; and as I was generally pretty well covered with them after walking a mile or two, I hailed the sight of a stream or pool ahead with sensations of pleasure not easily to be described. Aboo, who also suffered much, applied vegetable poultices to the injured parts, but the constant friction of walking prevented them from giving us any ease.

We lay by till late in the afternoon, and derived considerable benefit from the rest. While making our way through the forest a little before dark, we found a wild bee's nest, which yielded a bountiful supply of honey. Close to the first we discovered two others, but the one we took contained more honeycomb than we could carry away, and we did not attempt to get them. For supper this night we had a brace of New Guinea hares and some wallah nuts. The hares we knocked over with stones. Had I cared to use the firearms we could have killed as

many as we needed; for the country literally swarmed with them.

Nov. 2.

For eight or nine miles we found the country covered with an unbroken and almost impenetrable forest. We had some difficulty in keeping the right direction, for we could seldom catch a glimpse of the sun, owing to the foliage above our heads, and I had not even my pocket compass left, though how I lost it I cannot tell, seeing I usually carried it in my haversack. The trees in this forest were two hundred feet or more in height, and of many different varieties. Some of them bore beautiful clusters of yellow blossoms, and one tree reminded me vividly of the English chestnut: for, although the shape of the tree and leaves were different, the white blossoms appeared to be the same.

Upon emerging from the forest into a fine undulating plain, we discovered a party of five natives, three of them being women, picking something from the ground—probably wallah nuts. We could not cross the plain without exposing ourselves to view; but as I was growing less cautious, I marched boldly on my way, followed by Billy and Aboo. Our neighbours did not notice us. They either did not see us, or else mistook us for some of their countrymen.

The plain was covered with grass about four feet in height, and as the breeze played over it it looked like an immense field of green corn waving in the wind. It was only about four miles wide, and crippled as we were, we had crossed it before the sun was in the meridian. It was bounded on the south by a river eighty or a hundred yards broad, but fordable, though the water came over our shoulders. We stripped, rolled our clothes into bundles, and carried them and our arms above our heads, while we cautiously felt the way with our feet. Billy, with his usual misfortune, got into a hole, and let the luggage fall into the water. Fortunately for him nothing was spoilt.

The country south of the river was hilly, with deep, rugged, and rocky valleys, running mostly east and west. Some of the hills were four or five hundred feet in height, covered like the lowland with irregular patches of forest. Game, consisting of four or five kinds of deer, wild oxen, hares, bustards, quails, and other birds, was very numerous, and the trees, as in almost every part of the island I had visited, were alive with monkeys, parrots, cockatoos, paradise birds and small birds with most gaudy plumage. I shot a very fine black bull, from the skin of which Aboo contrived some first-rate sandals, which gave great ease to our feet.

Near our halting place was a grove of trees full of birds' nests. In one tree alone I counted over a thousand nests, and I should think altogether there must have been no less than twenty thousand of them. They were attached to the ends of the twigs, and hung down a yard or so in length, looking like the legs of stockings when filled out. At the risk of breaking his neck, Billy climbed up and fetched one down. Poor fellow! I daresay he thought he was making atonement for wetting my chattels by thus obliging me. The nest was composed of vegetable fibres and grass, lined with the down of some animal and a few feathers. Properly speaking it was many nests, one joined to the bottom of another, and entered by a separate hole in the side. That which I examined had eight such compartments, with all the entrances on one side, and exactly under each other. Two of the chambers contained young birds, two were empty, and the other four contained from three to seven eggs each. The eggs were of a whitish grey colour, sprinkled, principally at the larger end, with reddish brown spots.

The builders of these nests were little birds about the size of a sparrow, but of very handsome plumage. The ground colour of the body and wings was bright yellow. The wing covers and crown of the head were crimson, and the tail a deep maroon. The number

of these little creatures swarming about the trees, ground, and bushes in the neighbourhood, was astonishing; and the place was made quite cheerful by their lively chirping. I had seen these birds before: always in large flocks, and on the north-west side of the island only. Aboo informed me that he had occasionally seen small flocks of six or eight in the vicinity of Houtree; but they were evidently not regular inhabitants of the southern side of the island.

During the evening march we saw a fox again, of the same species as that mentioned once before. It was very shy, and ran under some bushes before I could get a fair aim at it. We passed the night in one of the valleys, in a hollow tree-trunk, which would easily have accommodated thirty men. It was not often we had found such a comfortable and commodious lodging.

Nov. 3.

We had an early visitor this morning in the shape of a monstrous scorpion, who dropped from the interior of the hollow tree as we were sitting at breakfast, and fell between Aboo's legs. It was ludicrous to see what a commotion this horrid reptile caused amongst us. Aboo almost turned heels over head in his haste to get away, and Billy made a most astonishing leap out into the open air, while the detest-

able creature cocked its tail up over its head and ran about in search of a victim until I transfixed it upon the end of my ramrod, where it repeatedly stung itself. This was the largest scorpion I had seen, for it was thirteen inches in length. It appeared to be a very old fellow, for its coat was a very shabby green, and had a faded appearance. Had this terrible old gentleman come amongst us in the night, I am afraid my party would have suffered another reduction in number. I made up my mind to eschew hollow trees in the future.

There was no change in the character of the country this day, except that as we advanced it became more thickly wooded, and rather more hilly. Parasitical plants clung to every tree, and in many places rendered the forest impenetrable; and the ground was covered with creepers, amongst them several bearing gourds and melons. The height and gracefulness of the trees, the beauty and brilliancy of colour of the birds, flowers and lizards, and the variety and number of butterflies, and other insects, fluttering through the air, together with the broken and romantic nature of the rocks, all combined to make this a most lonely part of the island. The soil was undoubtedly highly fertile, for it was covered with luxuriant foliage of all kinds, from tiny and delicate ferns to vegetable giants of enormous size

and height. It is a great pity that this island has not been colonised by the English. They should take possession of it without further delay. The riches of the forests alone are incalculable, and notwithstanding the failure of the Dutch settlements on its shores, and the reported inhospitality and treachery of the natives, I am firmly convinced that the country could be opened up with ease. It is possible, that those natives who are as yet unacquainted with Europeans, might offer some resistance at first; but if they are treated with moderation and kindness, they will soon be conciliated. There can be no doubt that the Dutch have been guilty of great cruelty towards the Papuans, besides robbing and cheating them in every possible way; and no brave and free-minded people would permit themselves to be insulted and injured with impunity. The Papuans are an independent race, as different as possible in character from the submissive Indians and Malays; and whatever people attempts to settle amongst them will have to treat them with due consideration and respect, or there will be war *à l'outrance*. They will never submit to be slaves or aliens in their own country.

The pain and inflammation in our feet, and the general exhaustion of our frames, engendered by the exertions of the last few days, made it imperatively

necessary that we should lay by to recruit, and we only marched forward to the next stream of water, a distance of seven or eight miles. Here we selected a convenient spot for camping, and made preparations for a lengthened halt: for I felt that we were now pretty secure from molestation by the natives. A wide stretch of country separated us from the village where the fatal and unfortunate fight had taken place; and in all probability the pursuit had been given up, or would not be extended so far to the south as this place: and the country in our neighbourhood was either entirely uninhabited, or the villages were so far apart, that we had no cause to fear an interruption in the depths of the forest.

Three days' rest renovated us wonderfully, but our feet were still in a very bad state, though they showed signs of healing. The constant application of the vegetable poultices was doing good, but I saw that some time must elapse before we should be again fit for long marches.

On the 7th, whilst wandering about the forest in the cool of the evening, I found several traps of the yagi spinder. They all save one contained spiders; and some of them were full of young ones about the size of a threepenny bit. On the 8th we had a hunting excursion, and killed three fine deer and a wild bull, all close to our camp. It was a day's work to

skin, cut up and spread out the strips of flesh to dry, but we wanted something to counteract the dulness and monotony of the time, which hung heavily on our hands. On the 12th, five large birds of the ostrich kind came near the camp, and I succeeded in knocking one over. They were of the same kind as that killed on the banks of the Royal. Our feet were healing nicely, and considering we had been living almost entirely upon animal food and fruit, and had undergone a great many hardships and much suffering, we enjoyed wonderfully good health.

On the 15th, we strapped on our knapsacks and once more resumed our tramp southward after a fortnight's rest, which had thoroughly set us upon our legs again. It was a very cool day, and we marched a good twenty miles without experiencing much fatigue. In this distance we crossed four large streams and two ridges of hills, but the face of the country had not noticeably changed. It was still full of rocky valleys and gullies, with large patches of jungle-growth here and there.

Nov. 16.

Three or four heavy showers of rain during the day, which drenched us to the skin in spite of the shelter afforded by the trees. About three o'clock in the afternoon it came down in torrents, and immense

tracts of low-lying land in the valleys were laid under water, and looked like large shallow lakes, with trees growing all over their surfaces. In some places the water came up as high as our knees, and sometimes we sunk a foot or eighteen inches into the soft mud, which was so tenacious that it was no easy matter to pull our feet out again. We passed the night in a miserable plight—wet and cold and covered with mud, and unable to find dry fuel with which to light a fire; and to add to our troubles, it continued to rain through the greater part of the night.

Nov. 17.

A most agreeable change in the weather. The day broke clear and fine, and like the parrots and monkeys overhead, we soon regained our spirits. Having dried our clothes and partaken of breakfast, we started in a south-west direction, along the base of a ridge of low hills. Every depression and hollow in the ground was full of water, and as the sun gained power and it began to evaporate, clouds of mist or steam rose from its surface, and enveloped the trees like a fog. From ten in the forenoon till five in the afternoon the heat was very great, and the water disappeared with great rapidity. Tracts of land that had been entirely under water in the morning were quite dry in the evening, but in deep

and sheltered gullies there still remained some very deep pools, in which millions of frogs had congregated.

Mounting the ridge about six o'clock, the whole country before us appeared one vast forest: in fact, it was like looking over a sea of foliage. The country was remarkably level too, at least, I could not discover the slightest inequality or elevation. Plunging in amongst the trees, which were of enormous height, we found scarcely any undergrowth to impede our progress, but it was difficult to maintain our course in any given direction, for want of an object to serve as a guide-post. The trees were nearly all of the same size and appearance, and were a species of teak.

Nov. 18.

As we advanced the trees grew less thickly together, and the ground between them was covered with long grass, in which great numbers of serpents harboured. As our feet were only protected by sandals, considerable caution was necessary to avoid treading upon them, as several of the species were venomous. After we had halted for the night I killed three very pretty pigeons at a shot. The body was a light drab colour, the wings and tail green, and the throat and breast streaked with crimson. The crest was also crimson.

Nov. 19.

About half-past seven this morning we passed two human skeletons, and a mile further to the westward a third. The bones had been much disturbed, and some of them were missing, one man having lost a leg, and another several of the rib-bones. This was a startling and unpleasant discovery, especially as we were forced to the conclusion that the men had lost their lives by foul play, the ground in the neighbourhood of the skeletons being much trodden and torn up as if in a violent scuffle. The state of the bones, and the number of ants running about them, showed that the men had been dead but a very few hours, and the bloody rags (the remains of their clothing) lying about, was evidence that they had not met with a natural or accidental death. Near the last skeleton I picked up a long dagger, such as most natives carry about with them. It was covered with rust, but I could not discover the least trace of blood upon it. Aboo was of opinion that these men had been surprised and murdered by a party of natives belonging to some hostile villages. Though there are no distinct tribes in New Guinea, the inhabitants of different districts often harbour the most malicious hatred of each other, and in consequence, fatal fights and murders are by no means rare.

It may probably be matter of surprise, that the

bodies of these men, having been dead but a short time, should be entirely stripped of their flesh; but any one acquainted with the destructive industry of ants will see nothing extraordinary in it. I have known them to consume the carcass of a cow in a single night, leaving the bones clean and polished like ivory. No doubt, however, the vultures had come in for their share of these poor fellows, which accounts for some of the bones being missing. We supposed that the man who was found lying by himself had attempted to escape by flight, as we could trace him by marks on the ground from the spot where his two comrades had died. Aboo also declared, that he could plainly discover the traces of twenty or thirty men who must have been there recently; and he was corroborated by Billy, who showed the most abject fear, and could hardly be restrained from rushing wildly from the spot. Indeed I had many misgivings myself, and thought it advisable to hurry away from the neighbourhood as quickly as possible. I half expected to meet with the remains of other unfortunates who had met with a tragic end, but I did not, and a little before mid-day we halted by a large pool of water, full of frogs as usual.

CHAPTER X.

Sight Mount Hercules and reach the Gladstone—Swim across the river—Long march—Pools—Innumerable flight of ducks—Herd of buffalo—Halt at the base of Mount Hercules—Pheasants—Pass the mountains near Mount Hercules—Heavy thunder and lightning—In sight of Mount Vulcan—Hard day's work—Suffer from hunger—March along the foot of an impassable range—Dangerous mountain pass—White eagles—Two fine deer shot—Small plains intersected by patches of forest—Streams infested by crocodiles—Quails killed with sticks—Tall grass—Driven nearly mad with thirst—Discover a small pool at the last moment—Dry lakes—Fresh appearance of the plains—March by starlight—Indications of an improvement in the character of the country.

THAT same evening we got clear of the forest, and to my inexpressible joy, sighted Mount Hercules in the extreme distance. Before we halted for the night we had reached the left bank of the river Gladstone. It is impossible to tell with what joy and gratitude towards God, I gazed upon and recognised this noble stream, and the landmarks in its neighbourhood. Although we had struck its course much higher up than on the former occasion, there was no mistaking its characteristics; and had I had the

least doubt of its identity it would have been removed by the distinct view I obtained of the mighty mountain which reared its majestic height in the south, distant I suppose sixty or seventy miles.

That night was a night of rest and peace, the horrors of the morning being forgotten in the present pleasure and hope of a speedy end to our toils. The next morning, before breakfast, we passed the river. Its width at this part not exceeding a hundred and fifty yards, and we having but little baggage to impede us, I determined to endeavour to swim across. In this attempt we were successful, though we were considerably exhausted by the exertion. On the opposite bank we made a hearty meal off a small deer which I shot the moment I landed before I had even dressed myself.

Pushing across the plain as rapidly as we could, we had marched about sixteen miles by ten o'clock. In the evening we tramped another eight, making twenty-four in all, not a bad day's work. It will be remembered that when we crossed this plain before we suffered greatly from thirst. Now, however, we found numbers of large shallow pools filled by the late heavy rains, and not yet evaporated. No buffalo were seen till nightfall, when we got near a large herd, and shot down a fine bull, securing as much of its flesh as we could conveniently carry. We camped

down on the open plain, and were on the move before daybreak, shaping our course for Mount Hercules, which began to look quite imposing. At sunrise enormous flocks of ducks passed over our heads, flying towards the Gladstone, and making a terrific noise with their wings. Two or three of them fell, apparently from exhaustion, and were secured without trouble. They were of a large, common, grey kind; but exceedingly tender and palatable. For hours these birds were passing over in one unbroken column, and even at mid-day some small flocks occasionally made their appearance. Large herds of deer and buffalo, some wild oxen, and a few ostriches or emus (the reader is left at liberty to call them which he pleases) such as were seen upon the banks of the Royal, were also passed during the day.

Nov. 22.

About eight in the morning, passed within a quarter of a mile of an immense herd of buffalo, which must have numbered at least ten thousand individuals. Other large herds, both of buffalo and deer, were passed from time to time throughout the day: indeed we had never before seen such quantities of large game. The enormous height of Mount Hercules is beginning to show out finely. We can-

not be more than twelve miles from its base, and the range of mountains on either side of it is in full view.

Nov. 23.

Our noon-day halt is at the base of Hercules, whose snowy summit seems to frown down upon us; but this is evidently only my fancy, for when I remarked to my companions, "How sternly grand he looks staring over the plain from his mighty height," Aboo gave a contemptuous grunt, and Billy inquired with a broad grin, "Think him a man den." I felt abashed and annoyed that my followers should take so little notice of this the largest and most wonderful mountain in the world; but, poor fellows, they were tired out with a continued series of hardships and dangers, and their whole anxiety was to reach a place where they might rest in ease and safety: and seeing they were not likely to reap any honours from their discoveries, I could hardly expect them to share my enthusiasm.

In the evening we marched only about four miles through the forest to find a more convenient camping place, and then lay to for the rest of the day. Pigeons being plentiful about here, I indulged in a little shooting, but they were so wild, and perched so near the tops of the tallest trees, that I only succeeded

in knocking over two or three. As some consolation, however, I bagged a magnificent deer, and three splendid pheasants of a new species.* The colour of their bodies was a deep black, speckled with cream colour. The wing covers, feathers on the cheeks, back of the neck and belly were scarlet: the remainder of the wing feathers and the tail a beautiful dark green; the whole plumage reflecting a golden sheen when the bird was in motion.

Nov. 24.

We did not move forward until five in the afternoon, when we commenced the ascent of the ridge running east of Mount Hercules and a little in rear of it. We had crossed this ridge by half-past seven, and comfortably located ourselves for the night in a small valley near its southern base. The night was intensely hot and oppressive, although, strange to say, we had had a cool and overcast day. Loud peals of thunder reverberated and echoed amongst the mountains, at intervals of about half a minute, and the lightning was continuous, five or six flashes being seen simultaneously, and of that vivid brightness only observed in tropical countries. Hundreds of frightened animals in our vicinity kept up an

* A description of the hen bird of this species is given on page 54.

abominable uproar. We recognized the cry of the moolah, and also, according to Aboo, that of the Papuan fox. The howl of the latter animal was exactly like that of a dog in distress. There was little fear of an attack from any of these creatures, while in their present terrified condition, nevertheless we took the precaution of making a large fire; but about midnight a violent storm of rain and hail extinguished it and drenched us thoroughly. Shivering with cold, we were compelled to walk about till morning for the sake of the little warmth engendered by the exercise. The day broke beautifully clear and fine, and as it appeared likely to be very hot, we made a hearty breakfast and hurried off to cover as much ground as possible during the freshness of the morning; but we were tired, having had no rest during the night, and our progress was slow. We crossed two low-lying ridges, working our way south-westward and about eight o'clock halted for the sleep we needed. In the latter part of the day the sun seemed to have more power than at noon, and it was late before we could resume our journey; but as we had a long twilight we continued to march eight or nine miles, following the trend of the valley in a westerly direction. As it became dark we noticed the red glare of a volcano in the south-east, which I supposed must proceed from

Mount Vulcan. It was faint, and would probably have escaped a casual observation.

Nov. 26.

We had some hard work to-day. The ground exceedingly rocky and broken, and before nine o'clock we had passed over six ridges of more or less considerable height. We were then so far done up that I gave orders to camp for the remainder of the day. Our provisions being exhausted, the evening was spent in hunting, but only a few monkeys were bagged.

Nov. 27.

Made a direct turn to the south, but found the mountain so steep and rugged that we were soon compelled to make a long and tiring detour to the west again. Near the summit of one range we met with a small flock of wild goats, and after a couple of bad shots had the mortification to see them get clear away from us. To-day, almost for the first time since I had been on the island, we suffered from hunger; and we were compelled at last to make a meal off a few parrots, for even the monkeys failed us amongst these mountains.

Two days were consumed in making our way along the base of an impenetrable range that barred

our progress to the south. During that time we advanced, perhaps, thirty miles to the west, finding the ground, especially in the valleys, covered with loose blocks of lava and detached rocks. Vegetation was luxuriant, but consisted principally of gigantic ferns, cactuses, shrubs, and jungle plants. None of the trees were of any great height, but we found some excellent cocoa-nuts. Parrots were swarming like ants, but game was scarce, and we did not see a single monkey. I had the good fortune to knock over one of the only herd of deer which came in our way, or else we should have fared hardly.

Nov. 30.

This morning, soon after starting, we discovered a break in the mountains where they appeared to be passable, and I determined to make the attempt. At first we had many difficulties to encounter. Rugged ravines to cross, and almost precipitous rocks to climb, where a single slip or false step would inevitably have led to a horrible death. After a time, however, we found that the opening towards which we were making our way was a natural pass between two large mountains of about six or seven thousand feet in height; but it was a very precarious and dangerous one. In most places there was only room for one abreast, with a perpendicular

rock above us of tremendous height. Every here and there a mass of rock had fallen away, and rendered the passage such a ticklish business, that I had not courage enough to attempt it except on my hands and knees. Aboo, who was sure of foot, got on better; but it was only the fear of being left behind that induced Billy to follow us, and he was quite incapable of taking care of the baggage, which I and Aboo bore alternately between us. Sometimes the path was level and broad as an English highway-road for several hundred yards, and then suddenly it would contract to a foot or two. In one place there was only just a sufficient hold for our feet, and here I nearly fell over the precipice from sheer nervousness. After advancing a couple of miles or so, we reached a broad ledge of rock, and we here made a short halt, and I ventured to peep into the gulf below. It was about five or six hundred feet to the bottom, with remarkably rough and jagged sides, so that we appeared to be gazing over the minarets and towers of an immense eastern city. To the opposite mountain the distance might have been a quarter of a mile; but afterwards we found it increase greatly, so that in the widest part it was little short of a mile. There were a few trees of various species of pine and laurel scattered over the face of the rocks, together with some shrubs,

mosses, lichens, &c. Some goats were seen, but in such positions that it would have been useless to fire at them as it would have been impossible to get at them. Many eagles, both black and white, as well as a great number of hawks, lodged amongst these crags and in the holes of the rocks, and were bold enough to fly within a few feet of our heads.

Continuing our way, we found a slight improvement in the path, and the rocks were not quite so precipitous as at first, though we were continually ascending, and were, I calculated about nine o'clock, between two and three thousand feet above the valley behind us from whence we had started. Another three hours and we emerged from the pass, and commenced to descend the southern slope of the range, the base of which we found to be clothed with a closely-growing forest of teak and other trees. Here we sighted a very large moolah; but as it went quietly on its way, we did not provoke a quarrel by becoming the aggressors. Some fine deer were treated with less respect, for two of them bit the dust before our rifles, and provided us with a much-needed supply of meat.

Dec. 1.

Marching all day through the solitary forest. As there was little undergrowth to impede our progress,

we advanced, probably, twenty-five miles or more in a direct line to the south. During the whole of that distance there was no break in the forest or alteration in its character. Game did not appear to be over abundant in it, but there were plenty of monkeys and parrots.

Dec. 2.

We had found no water during the whole of yesterday, and as we began to be badly in want of it, we started about three o'clock this morning, and in a couple of hours came to the skirts of the forest. After crossing a plain three or four miles wide, the forest re-commenced, and was as dense as ever. Between six and seven we came upon a brook, the bed of which was nearly dry. Here we stayed to cook our breakfast. Resumed our way at five o'clock in the afternoon, and soon came to a second small plain, followed by another patch of forest, in which we passed the night.

Dec. 3.

Throughout the day passing over a level country, alternately plains and forest, but the latter gradually becoming of less extent, and the trees growing less thickly together. Several small rivers and streams lay in our road, most of which harboured crocodiles,

which caused us much trouble and delay in fording them. At one stream we were obliged to use our firearms in self-defence, and a large crocodile was turned belly upwards. He had undoubtedly thought to make a dainty meal of one of us; but the tables were turned, and we dined heartily off crocodile steaks. In the afternoon a herd, consisting of fifteen buffalos, approached the trees under which we were resting, and a well-aimed shot penetrated the brain of the leading bull, and killed it instantaneously. We had also rare sport with the quails, which swarmed in the grass. To spare our ammunition we knocked them down with sticks and stones, and in this way killed nearly three dozen, besides several hares.

Dec. 4.

Passing over exactly the same kind of country as yesterday. Still less forest.

Dec. 5.

Entered an extensive plain with fern trees scattered about it, and the grass in places so tall that we could not see around us. Many small herds of buffalo and deer seen during the day, especially at nightfall. No water met with.

Dec. 6.

The grass so tall and strong as to offer a serious impediment to our advance. Not a single tree or bush passed, and we only found two small pools of liquid mud and frogs. Our sufferings from thirst were intense, and greatly added to by the pitiless heat of the sun, from which we had not the slightest protection. Marched all night in the hope of reaching water, but were disappointed. Daybreak found us dead beat, almost unable to speak, and in the deepest despair. Aboo and Billy lay on the ground, groaning, lamenting, and reviling me in turn; and I felt half mad myself. An almost uncontrollable desire to shoot my companions took possession of me; but, thank God, I had strength given me to resist the evil impulse. As the daylight increased I discovered a clump of palm trees about four miles south-west of our position, indicating in all probability the site of a pool. My exclamation of pleasure brought my two companions to their feet very quickly; and as wild with joy as we had been a minute ago with misery, we staggered towards the promising spot. So weak and exhausted had we become that I believe it took us more than two hours to reach the trees. Fortunately there was water there—a pool or lake covering six or seven acres. Disappointment would have been frightful,

and I am afraid would have led to murder, such a morbid dislike for each other seemed to have taken possession of our breasts; besides which, we must all have perished, for we were too far gone to search further. Our lips were so parched that they had cracked and were bleeding. Every drop of blood was licked in as if it had been the sweetest nectar, and when at length we reached the water we dragged our wearied bodies right into it, and drank most greedily. All enmity fled away, and we embraced each other, weeping for joy, though it was hours before we could speak intelligibly. About midday we all three became very sick and ill, no doubt from having overcharged our stomachs with water. Towards evening myself and Aboo recovered in some degree, but Billy was much worse, and I became alarmed on his account. A night's rest, however, brought him round. We spent the whole of the day by this pool, which was visited by several herds of deer and buffalo, who appeared but little alarmed by our presence. The water was putrid and full of all sorts of filthy vermin, not the least revolting of which were the large frogs; yet both we and the beasts of the field could drink it, not only without disgust, but with a relish, though the very odour would have been sufficient to cause me to turn from it with repugnance under ordinary circumstances.

Dec. 9.

Struck across the plain in a southerly direction. Observed that the ground had a slight rise in front of us, and the grass did not exceed five feet in height. No trees in sight, save the solitary clump we had left behind us. Came upon the dry beds of ten or a dozen small lakes, lying in a cluster, and surrounded by a thicket of low bushes; but not a drop of water met with from morning till night, when we reached a goodly-sized lake of tolerable water. A few palms and some bushes found nourishment near it, and gave cover to a great many quails.

One could not avoid remarking how green and fresh these plains looked, although they might almost be said to be destitute of water. The grass and herbage was upright and strong, and not in the least degree faded, though the ground felt as hard as iron. The only animal life I noticed besides buffalo and deer were quails and a few vultures and hawks.

Dec. 10.

As it was yesterday so it is to-day—one interminable plain, treeless and parched. Suffered greatly for want of a shelter from the sun's rays, which induced me to lay by the greater part of the day, and march on far into the night. There was no moon, but it was starlight, and we had no difficulty in

keeping our course, which I altered from direct south to south-east, in order to reach Lake Alexandrina.

Just before midnight we were considerably cheered by coming upon a large brook. This promised a speedy change in the character of the country before us, which, I need hardly say, was highly desirable. As it was too dark to pass over with safety, and crocodiles might be lurking amongst the sedge on its banks, we deferred the passage until morning. We did not pass a very comfortable night, and when daylight appeared it was hailed with thankfulness.

The width of the brook I found to be about twenty yards, and there was four feet of water in it. Its course, from west to east, was well defined by the hedge of bushes, with here and there a palm tree, which lined its banks. To the south the plains rolled on, unbroken by any object that met our eyes; but eastward a sprinkling of palms encouraged me to hope that we were approaching a more fruitful land. As we advanced, nearly parallel with the brook, these signs of increasing fertility became more frequent; and a few other trees began to appear as well as shrubs and bushes. In about twelve miles the brook made a great sweep to the south, running across our path, and compelling us to again pass over it. The depth had here increased so much that we were some time in finding a fordable place with only

five feet of water. One crocodile was seen—certain evidence that more were at hand.

Dec. 12.

An hour after starting we came in sight of some low hills, and upon gaining their elevation discovered another chain ahead, the intervening country being fairly sprinkled over with clusters of trees. The grass was here scarcely two feet high, and the better wooded the country became the shorter it grew. Halted at night by a rivulet, which I supposed to be a tributary of the brook we had left in the morning.

CHAPTER XI.

Cheering prospect—Threatened exhaustion of the ammunition—Reach north-west shore of Lake Alexandrina—Thick forest skirting the water's edge—Slow progress—Boldness of the monkeys—Alarmed by a moolah—Thicket of reeds—Dimensions and description of Lake Alexandrina—Remarkable tenacity of life in a deer—Network of creepers—Christmas Day—Mountainous region—Accident to Billy—Delicious fruit—Monstrous snake—Great number of streams and rivers—Extraordinary black ferns—Rock caverns—Large-maned deer—An aged moolah killed—Pass the Papuan Ghauts—Meet with friendly natives—Papuan villages—Pass a night in native hut—Arrive at Mahalla's village—Start for Houtree with party of native traders—Curious old cannon.

Dec. 13.

A MOST cheering prospect ahead. The palms and coarse grass (sure signs of a barren soil) have almost disappeared, and fine timber trees supply their place. The country is also becoming hilly, and we crossed this day two small streams.

Dec. 14.

Upon examining my powder-horn, I found that I had only about twenty charges left—a most disheartening discovery, and one which caused me dis-

quietude for the rest of the day. It was obvious that I should have to be exceedingly careful not to waste a shot, or we should be threatened with a new danger, that of starvation.

About seven o'clock we came to a large wood or arm of a forest, and were marching under the shade of the trees for nearly two hours. Upon emerging into the open country I got a splendid shot at a wild ox, and planting a bullet in its shoulder, rolled it over beautifully. It tried to rise, but Aboo closed with it and cut its throat. It was a cow, and the first we had seen for some time. I caused as much of its flesh as we could carry to be cut up and dried in the sun, which, of course, necessitated our halting where we were for the rest of the day.

Dec. 15.

We had not been marching long this morning before we came to a range of hills, about 400 feet in height. Upon gaining this summit, to my great joy, I found we were within four miles of the north-west shore of Lake Alexandrina. Something less than an hour sufficed to bring us to its margin, and we proceeded south, keeping close to the water. The mountains to the north-east were in full view, running close to the head of the lake, and rising abruptly, almost from the water's edge. The country

on this, the west side, was rather hilly, though there was no considerable elevation. Rushes grew on the shore in immense quantities, but there was little wood near the water in this part. Further inland the ground was covered with clumps of trees in a very pretty manner, intermixed with an occasional patch of jungle, or thicket of low bushes and tropical plants. As we got further south, however, we were evidently approaching a large forest. The trees grew thickly together, forming extensive woods, and ran down to the water's edge, as on the eastern shore. Before nightfall the foliage overhead was so densely matted together that we could not see the sky overhead; yet we were able to keep close to the water, which served as a guide to point out the right direction, and to keep us from wandering out of our course. Most fortunately we had a few fishhooks left, and were thus enabled to add an agreeable addition to our evening meal, in the shape of a dish of fish. We had, also, plenty of wallah nuts; but I was longing for a little bread or grain food, which I had scarcely tasted or seen for months.

On the 16th, 17th, and 18th, our progress was exceedingly slow and tedious. We did not march on the average more than eight or ten miles a day. This was owing to the increased density of the forest, and the great quantity of vines and creepers which inter-

laced between the trees, and covered the ground. It was scarcely possible to walk fifty paces without tripping up, or having to hew our way with the axe. We were also greatly annoyed and provoked by the monkeys overhead, who pelted us for hours together with wallah nuts and their excrement. We could not afford to give them a shot by way of warning, and at last they grew so bold that many of them came down to within a few yards of our heads, to grin at us, and play their tricks. One colony of monkeys would frequently follow us for half the day, running from tree to tree on all sides of us.

Dec. 19.

We were very much alarmed to-day by a large moolah jumping into the path just before us. Before I had recovered my presence of mind sufficiently to aim and fire, it had disappeared in the opposite direction, and we saw no more of it.

The forest had now begun to recede from the lake, and a thicket of reeds took its place. Though not so bad to get through as the vines and creepers, we yet found a stretch of a dozen miles a fatiguing day's work. Two days more of travelling over similar ground brought us to the south end of the lake, and on the morning of the 22nd we finally turned our backs upon it, and one again plunged into the depths of the forest.

Lake Alexandrina, I calculate to be between sixty and seventy miles in length, and from fifteen to thirty broad. It is oval in shape, the south end being much the broadest. On the north and north-east it is hemmed in by mountains of considerable elevation; and the east and south shores are deeply indented, and cut by the mouths of many large streams. On the contrary, on the west side the shore is scarcely broken by a single bay or inlet, and but a few small brooks and rivulets there empty themselves into the lake. Of the depth of the lake, I know nothing; but, from the number of islands scattered over its surface, I suppose it to be shallow. There is a great quantity of fish in its waters, many of them of enormous size; and large game is abundant all round it. The soil in its neighbourhood is, undoubtedly highly fertile, and southwards it is encompassed by forests of tremendous timber trees. My instruments being unfortunately lost, I could not make an accurate survey; but I hope to see men of greater ability than myself, and fitter for the work, take the cue, and open up this large and important country to the knowledge of geographers.

Our stock of meat being nearly consumed, and no deer having come in our way during the last day or two, it became necessary for me to wander out of my way in search of a supply. Accordingly, I spent

the evening in hunting up a quarry. Assisted by Aboo, I soon found the tracks of a large herd of deer, and in a little less than an hour came up with them. I did not aim so steadily as usual, and, though the animal fell, it rose again immediately, and followed in the wake of its companions. If we had had dogs, it would have been pulled down in a few minutes, for it was badly hit; but as it was, there was nothing left for us but to pursue after it as quickly as we could run, keeping our eyes on the blood that marked every step the poor creature had taken. It must have made an extraordinary effort to escape; for it was nearly dark before we overtook it, and we then found it lying dead with its left shoulder penetrated with the bullet which had passed out on the right side of the neck near the breast—the most remarkable tenacity of life that I ever observed in an animal of the deer kind. We had a weary tramp with the dead carcass back to the spot where we had left Billy and the baggage. When we arrived there, we found him fast asleep, with his feet toasting at a good fire, and his head pillowed on the pack.

The 23rd was a day of rest. On the 24th we continued our journey south, and were greatly retarded by the vegetable growth which formed a network amongst the tree trunks. A like obstruction prevented us from moving more than seven or eight

miles on the 25th, Christmas Day; which, however, was very little like Christmas to us; for I should think we had at least a hundred degrees of heat in the shade, to say nothing of the want of Christmas fare.

Dec. 26.

Passed over some very hilly ground in the latter part of the day. In the valley between two of the ranges, crossed a river of very respectable width, though it was fordable. The next week we were journeying through a mountainous country, the general characteristics of which were ranges of from five or six hundred to three or four thousand feet in height; covered for the greatest part with forest and jungle growth. Good streams of water were found in most of the valleys, and one or two small lakes, from which we obtained an abundant supply of fish. Quails, pheasants, birds of paradise, parrots, cockatoos, finches, and thousands of other birds crowded the trees and ground, and we had seldom seen a greater quantity of large game.

The weather was fearfully hot, and we were all more or less indisposed, insomuch that I felt it necessary to grant a couple of days' rest.

Jan. 4, 1873.

Billy met with a painful accident to-day. While cutting wood for the fire, he struck his left hand, and

severed the thumb. I dressed and bound up the stump as well as I could with the scanty means at my disposal, and fortunately no disastrous results followed the mishap, though he was rendered useless for the time.

Jan. 5.

The country still mountainous in parts, the plains much cut up with rocky ravines and hollows. The trees of enormous growth, some of the wallah trees considerably more than two hundred feet high. We were greatly refreshed in these plains by a large, red, round fruit, something like a plum, but infinitely more delicious. It was borne by a tree of large size, in incredible quantities, at such a height from the ground that they were only to be obtained by climbing or knocking them off with stones.

Jan. 6.

While passing through a wood of tall trees, I saw a monstrous snake lying amongst the branches, about a hundred feet from the ground. It was a dark grey colour, almost black on the back, and full forty feet in length. We lost no time in getting to a respectful distance from this terrific creature, which appeared to be asleep, for it made no movement. We crossed no less than nine rivers and

streams to-day, two of them of such depth that we were compelled to swim over; and the next morning, in the space of four hours, we came to three more, the last of which was the broadest we had seen since leaving the Gladstone. Hardly had we swum across it and landed on the opposite bank, when a whole shoal of crocodiles came down the stream, attracted, probably, by the commotion in the waters. I fancy there must be a large river somewhere to the east, which drains this part of the country; or perhaps these streams empty themselves into some lake. I greatly regretted that I had not the time and means to solve this question.

Jan. 8.

We have now reached one of the prettiest and most romantic tracts of country I have ever seen. The greatest part of the surface is covered with remarkably rugged and broken mountains, sustaining a thick growth of the most lovely-looking foliage. Amongst the plants was one very extraordinary fern, bearing black fronds. It was about twelve or fourteen feet high, and from a distance looked like a large cluster of ostrich feathers, such as are mounted on a hearse. Large flocks of scarlet parrots were flying about amongst the trees, and made a grand contrast with the black and white cockatoos and the gaudy birds of paradise.

The rocks were full of caverns, some of them of large size. I had the curiosity to explore a few, but met with nothing to repay the trouble, though some of them extended further underground than I cared to venture. A great many wild goats found their habitation amongst these mountains, generally appearing in flocks of seventy or eighty; and we saw half a dozen moolahs. Though a most beautiful country to the eye, it was rough to travel over; and we tired quickly, though pretty well used to long marches. In the evening I shot a magnificent deer of a new species. Its peculiarity was that it had a long mane of silky hair. The neck was short, the head handsome, the body short and thick, and covered with fine, reddish-brown hair. The animal must have weighed at least five or six hundred pounds, for neither of us could lift it, and Aboo was an exceedingly powerful fellow.

The 9th and 10th we remained at our last halting-place, both to rest and to afford an opportunity of drying a supply of the flesh of the deer. On the latter day a moolah was observed lurking about in the neighbourhood of our camp, and as its attitude was rather threatening, I gave it the contents of both barrels of my rifle. The result was to place him *hors de combat;* but he required a third shot to finish him off. It was evidently a very old fellow.

His teeth were decayed, his body small and very emaciated, while he had lost an eye, and possessed claws three inches in length.

Jan. 11.

A cool day, which enabled us to make a forced march of twenty miles or so; not a trifle, over such rough ground as lay in our way. I don't think I was ever better in my life than at present, and I thoroughly enjoyed the tramp. Billy's hand appears to be progressing favourably, but he complains much of shooting pains up his arm, and he is perfectly useless as yet. I think he is putting the worst face on the matter, though I must acknowledge it was a very painful and serious accident; but Master Billy is a sly dog, and, like most Australians, loves to take things easy and fare well. He is doing both at present. He eat so much venison yesterday that it is a marvel to me how he escaped an attack of apoplexy, and it would be a wonder indeed if he could carry anything but his own belly.

Jan. 12.

Almost clear of the rocky ground, and made an excellent march to-day, though rather heavily loaded. Between five and six in the afternoon, a herd of several hundred deer passed before us at full gallop, going in a northerly direction.

On the 13th entered a tree-covered plain of some extent, and the following day came in sight of the mountains already described under the name of the Papuan Ghauts. On the 14th commenced to pass them, some sixty or seventy miles westward of our former line of march, as I supposed. We had three days of most exhausting work, during which we crossed several secondary ranges; and on the evening of the 17th again found ourselves on tolerably level ground. As I had but a single charge of powder left, I determined to proceed at once to the village of the hospitable chief Mahalla,* feeling certain that he would give us a friendly reception, and provide us with those necessaries we were so badly in want of. I calculated we were not more than six days' march from this village, and hoped we might be able to reach it in less time.

Jan. 18.

Full of excitement at the thought of so soon meeting again with some of our fellow-creatures whom we could call friends, we were astir very early this morning, marching off as the first streaks of daylight appeared. Perhaps the reader may have some idea of the excitable pleasure that ran through our nerves, in mine at least, when, about eight o'clock, we came

* See pp. 19 *et seq.*

up with a party of five natives who were busily engaged shooting birds and monkeys. As soon as they saw us, they came forward and saluted us without any reserve, and I was somewhat astonished when one of the men held out his hand in the European fashion, and expressed, in broken Dutch, his gratification to behold me in safety again. It turned out that this man had seen me at Mahalla's village, where he was staying at the time of my visit. He kindly gave me half a dozen monkeys, and, what was to me a great luxury, a small quantity of rice. Upon my offering him the only two dollars I had remaining, for a few charges of powder, he very generously gave me half a horn full, and refused the money; but I pressed it upon him. I consider this a remarkable incident of friendly feeling on the part of this man, for powder is as valuable amongst the Papuans as gold dust amongst us. It showed that he at least had not learned that narrow-minded selfishness which many of his fellow-countrymen have imbibed from their Dutch oppressors.

Upon my inquiring after Mahalla, my new-found friend seemed to think that I should not find him in the village, as, when he last saw him, he was contemplating a journey to the coast; but he declared that I was sure to be well received by the people there. We continued in the company of these men until

evening, when we resumed our journey, receiving some directions from them as to the best and shortest route to our destination.

Jan. 19.

All day we were passing across a monotonous plain, covered with a coarse tall grass and clumps of trees. Several times we noticed places where fires had been made, and trees that had had some of their branches lopped off, signs that we were nearing an inhabited country.

On the 20th we passed two parties of natives, and the next day a small village, and several persons cattle-keeping, but did not communicate with any of them. On the 22nd the first cultivated ground was seen; and at a tiny hamlet, consisting of four or five huts, we made a half-hour's halt, and procured some boiled rice and a few coarse cakes made of maize flour. The 24th we held friendly converse with several parties of the natives, some of whom had heard of us. They had been told, so they said, that I was a Dutchman, and had gone into the interior to establish a fort and trading station on behalf of some of my fellow-countrymen. It would appear from this that England is not the only country where news, like a snowball, gains by rolling. What caused me the greatest astonishment at the time was, that with

such an idea in their heads they should not only offer me no interruption, but actually treat me with kindness. I should pity the Dutchman who would attempt to establish himself in the interior. A thousand to one he would get his brains knocked out within a week.

Three villages lay in our road, or rather three small collections of huts, for none of them exceeded in size the smallest of English hamlets. I ran the risk of passing the night in the last one we came to. I say risk, for although we saw nothing suspicious, the inhabitants were not very demonstrative in their hospitality, and I took care that a good watch was kept all night. According to information gleaned here, we were only a day's march from Mahalla's village. I therefore started very early, hoping to reach it in a morning's tramp. In this we were successful, arriving there a little before nine o'clock. Some distance outside the village we met with a party of the inhabitants, who recognized us and accompanied us into the place. Mahalla had not yet departed upon his expedition to the coast, but intended to start in four days' time, and proposed that I should wait and go with him. I was quite willing to do this, both because we wanted a rest and I could see it would please him, and of course I was anxious to gratify him as far as was in my power,

seeing so much had depended, and still depended, on his friendliness and the influence it had on his fellow-countrymen.

During my stay here I was the guest of Mahalla, and had I been the king of the country, I could not have been treated with greater kindness and respect than was shown to me both by him and his people. My two servants were quartered upon some of the people, an arrangement which enabled Master Billy to get drunk on toddy as often as he pleased: for our entertainers acted upon the maxim, "Love me, love my dog," and treated my dependents with as much consideration as myself.

Mahalla having announced all in readiness, we started for Houtree, making a circuit to several other villages on our way, at each of which our caravan received a considerable addition, so that at length it numbered more than three hundred souls—men, women, and children; for the poor women had to serve as carriers, though there were also many pack oxen. The merchandize they were conveying to the coast consisted of many kinds of fancy woods, gums, camphor, a few other drugs, precious stones (not of great value), spices, grown in a wild or semi-wild state, but of excellent quality, the skins of birds, monkeys, &c., &c., and a variety of similar articles.

In one of the villages called at, there was a small

inclosure, in which four guns were planted in position. One of them was a brass six-pounder of Dutch make; the others were merely pieces of iron tubing set into a large log of timber. They had been procured, so I was told, from the Dutch traders. Many of the Papuan villages have a similar battery, from which they fire, when they can spare the powder, just for the sake of the noise.

CHAPTER XII.

Reach the coast—Take possession of my old quarters—Pay off Aboo—Malay and Chinese craft in Houtree bay—Arrange with people of a Chinese junk to leave the island—Observations on the habits and customs of the Papuans—Boyhood of the young Papuan—Papuan arms—Marriages—Reverence—Graves—Language—Centre of the island uninhabited—Pirates—Rivers and lakes—Minerals—Sail for the island of Banda—On board a Chinese junk—Arrive at Banda, and am laid up by a severe attack of dysentery—Recover, and leave Banda *en route* for England—Conclusion.

So much time was lost in calling at these villages that we did not reach Houtree until the 8th of February. The old chief, Kilu, was well, and as friendly as ever, though he appeared a little jealous of the attentions shown me by Mahalla. We were received with as little demonstration as though we had only been absent an hour or two, and even Aboo's wife and children greeted him as though he had just returned from a short walk; but Danang's wife and her relatives were most boisterous in their grief when they heard the news of his sad death. The poor fellow had no relatives of his own in the village, he having been born and bred in the interior, and

been compelled to leave his native place owing to some offence he had committed.

I again took possession of the hut where I had been quartered at first, and found my goods safe, and carefully preserved, a convincing proof of the honesty of these people when their goodwill has been won. I may mention that one of the boxes contained money to the amount of nearly three hundred dollars; but, of course, that fact was known only to myself. I was exceedingly thankful to get at these supplies; for besides being thus enabled to newly rig myself (I was dreadfully shabby—almost naked in fact), I had here many luxuries and necessaries, of which I was badly in need, such as tea, coffee, sugar, soap, preserves, &c., &c., &c. I paid off Aboo at once, and when he had received his reward, he found himself quite a nabob in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen. Poor Danang's wages I handed over to his wife.

There were nine Malay and two Chinese vessels in the bay of Houtree when I arrived there. Four left and one arrived the next day; and they all appeared to be doing a brisk trade. No European ship had been there lately, and none were expected at that season; so I made arrangements with the people of a Chinese junk, who agreed to land me on the island of Timorlaut, where I could easily procure a

passage in a Dutch vessel, for the moderate sum of twenty dollars.

During my second stay at Houtree, I was enabled to complete a few observations on the habits and customs of the natives, which I will insert here, as I have no doubt they will prove interesting to some readers. To begin with the birth of the young Papuan. If he happens to be of the masculine gender, he is marched off at once to a kind of medicine man, fetish man, or sorcerer, who says some cabalistic trash over him, and anoints his limbs with the fat of a serpent, to make him strong and cunning, two qualities highly esteemed amongst the Papuans; for which service the fetish man receives a handsome donation, for to be mean toward the ubiquitous fetish is about the last thing the happy father would think of. If the child, however, should be a girl, she is denied the advantages of the jargon and snake's fat; and, almost as soon as she can toddle about, is taught to make herself generally useful; and, until she is married, has a pretty hard time of it. When the latter event takes place, however, she is almost invariably well treated by her husband; so, as may well be imagined, the Papuan ladies are quite as anxious to bind with the silken bands as their fairer sisters in another hemisphere.

During his boyhood, the young Papuan has to

work hard like his sisters; but a great portion of his time is taken up with manly exercises, to fit him for the fight and hunting field. He is taught to shoot with a bow and arrows, and with a musket if his father possesses one. He also learns to fence off the blow of a spear or arrow; and so expert does he become that no European swordsman could touch him. Owing to this skill, which is universal amongst them, they do not use bows and arrows in warfare, except when they lay an ambuscade, or fire at a foe from behind. They use spears largely, and short swords, which they prefer of European manufacture when they can procure them. The weapon of defence, with which they parry, is a long, narrow shield, sharpened at both ends, so that it can be used to stab an enemy. It is fastened to the left arm with three thongs, and is usually made of hard wood with iron points. But to possess a musket is the object of every Papuan's ambition, and all who can afford it purchase one from the traders who frequent their coasts. Old Tower muskets and worn-out rifles, showy Brummagem guns, Chinese guns, with barrels eight or nine feet in length, flint-lock guns, and all the old rubbish of the like nature that can be collected together, find a ready sale here; and lucky is the Papuan who procures a piece that will fire twenty rounds without bursting. The Tower Brown

Besses are the best guns they can obtain, and fetch the highest prices: for they know them to be reliable.

When the lads have completed their fourteenth or fifteenth year, they are considered to be men; but are not allowed to marry and settle down until they have performed some noteworthy action, such as the slaying of an enemy, or committing of a clever theft. The ceremony of marriage is very simple. The bridegroom and his friends proceed to the residence of the bride, and fetch her and her friends to his home, where they feast and get fuddled for a week or ten days. On these occasions the ladies dip as deep into the toddy as their lords, and, I am sorry to say, often get much more helpless after their potations. The feasting over (for which, by the bye, the bridegroom pays), the bride's father produces her dowry, and the transaction is ended. If she happens to have no father, her nearest male relative has to act the part of one to her, even to the paying of the dowry: for no girl would go off hands without a dowry.

They one and all pay great reverence to old people and widows, who can compel their children to maintain them. Should a son revile his father, he is sold into slavery as a murderer, and for merely neglecting a parent, he is fined half his goods. The crime

of striking a parent is not known amongst them; but should anyone be guilty of it, he would, undoubtedly, be put to death, though capital punishment is scarcely known on the island—at least so I was told at Houtree, though I have since heard it contradicted by Europeans who have traded along the coast.

The custom of placing the dead in trees is said to exist in the island; but no instance of it ever came under my notice, though I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statement. The bodies of the dead at Houtree, and other villages which I visited, were wrapped in a kind of coarse cloth or matting, and buried in a quiet part of the forest—a mile or two from the huts, and no one ever willingly went near the graves, either from superstition or reverence. I, however, ventured to visit the place of graves at Houtree, and found some twenty or thirty mounds, in each of which a spear was stuck upright, with a bundle of empty calabashes hung upon it; and there were also many calabashes hung upon the trees over the graves, but I could never learn with what purpose, for everyone shunned the subject when I attempted to glean information, and I was afraid to own that I had seen them lest I should give offence.

But one language appears to be spoken on the

island, and of that, many of the words are, without doubt, derived from the Malay, Hindoostanee, Chinese, and other tongues. It is easily learned, or, at least I found no difficulty in mastering it, and is a pleasant-sounding language, especially as it is spoken with a clear, distinct pronunciation, without any unpleasant guttural twang.

Now for a few general observations upon the island itself. The centre is entirely uninhabited, though it is probable that is is frequently visited by roving parties. The inhabited land forms a belt of from sixty to a hundred or a hundred and twenty miles round the centre; and though the villages, from what I could learn, are pretty thickly scattered, they are of small size, and contain but few people. There are also certain parts of the coast, especially the east coast, which have no villages and no fixed inhabitants; and these places are favourite harbours of refuge for the pirates and robbers who infest the eastern seas: for they have no fear of an interruption here, and the news of a vessel lying in shore soon spreading, the natives speedily proceed to the spot, carrying provisions and such things as are likely to be acceptable to these lawless vagabonds, who are chiefly Malays and Chinese, though a sprinkling of Dyaks, Javanese, Papuans, Lascars, and even a European or two, are frequently found amongst them.

The characteristics of the surface of the island are very varied, and I met with many ranges of mountains, as will be seen by the foregoing narrative, the two principal of which are the Papuan Ghauts, and the chain of which Mount Hercules is the chief point. Two volcanoes were met with by me, besides smaller and extinct ones in great number; and I have good reason to think that others will be discovered when the island is more thoroughly explored. The plains are extensive and numerous, but confined to the interior; and though there are tracts of inferior land, there is none that may be called poor or barren. The vegetable kingdom is represented here by millions of magnificent species; indeed, a New Guinea forest is a truly grand sight; while for the glorious splendour of the plumage of the birds, no country can compare with it.

Of the river system I cannot say much. From what I learned from the natives and others whom I questioned, I should think that most of the rivers and streams are comparatively insignificant, with the exception of the Royal, which evidently drains an immense tract of country. Rivers were crossed in the interior which I feel confident did not run to the coast, but emptied themselves into lakes; and I have therefore come to the conclusion that other large bodies of water, besides Lake Alexandrina, will

be found in the interior. This opinion is borne out by the number of small lakes which we passed near the centre of the island.

Of the mineral productions of the island, I did not find many traces during my journey; but I know that the natives collect gold dust in small quantities, and silver is so common amongst them as to show that there must be extensive mines somewhere. Copper, lead, iron, and tin are very abundant, as are precious stones; but few of the latter are of much value. Good pearls are procured on the coast.

Speaking conjecturally, I should say that at least three-fourths of the surface of the island are covered with forests or mountains, the former composed chiefly of magnificent timber trees of inestimable value. There are also many fancy woods, used in perfumery and for inlaying boxes, small articles of furniture, &c.

Acting upon the advice of several of the masters of the junks and proas lying in Houtree bay, I altered my mind about going to Timorlaut, and chose the island of Banda, as being the most likely place to find a vessel at that time of the year. In consideration of a trifling addition to the fare I was to pay, the people with whom I had made arrangements to sail made no objection to putting into Banda to land me; and on the 24th of February I

went on board accompanied by Billy. Aboo was one of the last to part from us, and as I bid the good fellow farewell, tears sprang into his eyes. Of course I made more presents to old Kilu and the rest of my friends; and several of them, including Kilu and Mahalla, expressed a hope that I would some day come back to Houtree, assuring me that I should be received like "a brother." Though I was longing for the home from which I had now been absent more than five years, a feeling of regret came over me as we glided from the harbour, and the darkness of night setting in hid from my straining eyes the outline of the shores I shall perhaps never see again.

The junk which was now carrying me and my fortunes was very small—its burden may have been forty or fifty tons, not more—and was manned by four Chinese men and two boys, who eat nothing during the voyage but rice and salted fish, and such vermin in the shape of beetles and cockroaches as they found on board among the cargo. As these men were totally ignorant of any language which I understood (they traded at Houtree through an interpreter), we could hold no communication together, which made the few days I passed with them additionally monotonous. There was no accommodation on board for either passengers or crew. I slept on my boxes at night, and during the day stowed myself

anywhere where I thought I was out of the way. As to the crew, they seemed never to sleep, for they disturbed me constantly at night with their chattering and laughter.

On the 1st of March we arrived at Banda, and cast anchor abreast of the town, which is a fine-looking place, with large imposing buildings and warehouses built of stone. The same evening I landed, and having presented myself at the Governor's house, was kindly received, granted permission to reside on the island until I could obtain a passage in a Dutch vessel, and directed to the house of a customs officer for lodging for myself and servant. We were taken in, but the next morning I was too ill to rise, and was carried in my bed to the military hospital, where I was laid up for two months with a severe attack of dysentery, to which I nearly succumbed. During this period I was most kindly treated by a Doctor Van Handel, and by my nurse, who was a native soldier; but Billy never once came near me, and I heard that he was almost constantly in a state of beastly intoxication.

My recovery was exceedingly slow and tedious, and it was many months before I recovered my usual strength; and even to this day I feel the effects of the illness.

On the 7th of June an opportunity occurred of

leaving Banda, and I sailed for Singapore in the Dutch brig "Anaconda," and arrived there on the 22nd. I was so fortunate as to almost immediately procure a passage from Singapore to Calcutta; but I was detained a long time at the latter place before I found a ship in which I could send Billy back to Sydney. However, I got rid of him at last, and very shortly afterwards set sail for England, where I arrived completely broken down with the fatigues and hardships I had undergone during my wanderings in India, Malaya, and New Guinea.

THE END.

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SKETCH MAP
OF A JOURNEY ACROSS
THE ISLAND OF PAPUA
BY
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